

Special  
International  
Section, Follows p. 40

66 ETHERNET ADAPTERS TESTED

JUNE 1994

# BYTE

THE MAGAZINE OF TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

6 Cross-Platform Group  
Schedulers Reviewed

Novell's Newest DOS

An Easier Way To Develop  
Lotus Notes Applications PAGE 40

# 80x86 WARS

Coming: radical new designs from  
Intel and others will push the  
80x86 architecture to new heights.



## PLUS

- New OS/2 will exploit symmetric multiprocessing hardware PAGE 267
- Porting Mac applications to the PowerPC PAGE 273
- Special Report: Distributed Computing PAGE 121

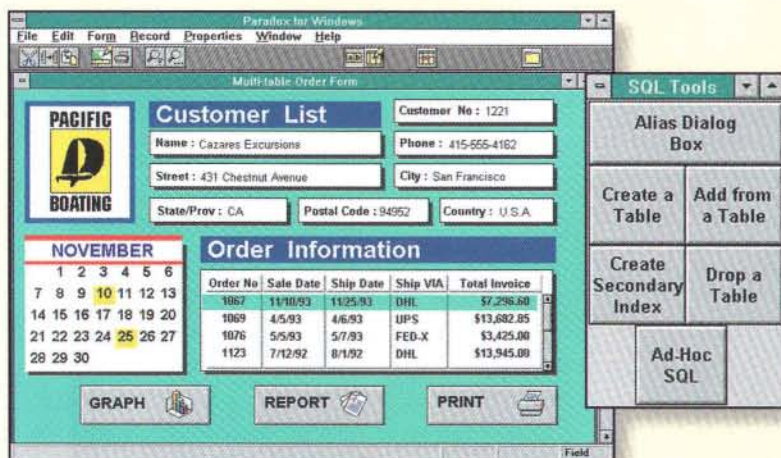
International Edition



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## Look what you get!

**SpeedBar® icons** provide push-button access to frequently used commands

**Object Inspectors™** let you click on any object to reveal or change its properties

**Desktop Folders** organize tables, forms, reports, and queries

**Visual Form and Report**

**Designers** are drawing tools that rival graphics packages

**Style Sheets** offer instant formats and lets you save your own templates

**Graphical Query By Example** lets you get answers to questions quickly and easily

**Productivity Experts™** show you the easiest way to complete any task

**Multiple data formats** use data from Paradox for DOS and Windows, dBASE and FoxPro tables

**Instant SQL connectivity** for upsizing to client/server applications

**Workgroup Desktop** to share tables, queries, and complete applications with others

**ObjectPAL** programming language makes it easy to create Windows and client/server applications

Windows—using standardized training and familiar applications.

### Upsize to client/server with instant SQL connectivity

Instant plug-in connectivity to popular SQL servers like Borland InterBase®, Sybase/MS®, and Oracle give you immediate client/server capability. So, as your information needs grow, Paradox lets you “upsized” your familiar desktop and network applications, while maintaining the familiar, easy-to-use look and feel. And Paradox is also the only database with

a Workgroup Desktop, allowing you to send tables, query results, or even complete applications to anyone, anytime, anywhere in the world. No wonder more client/server applications already use Paradox than any other PC database.

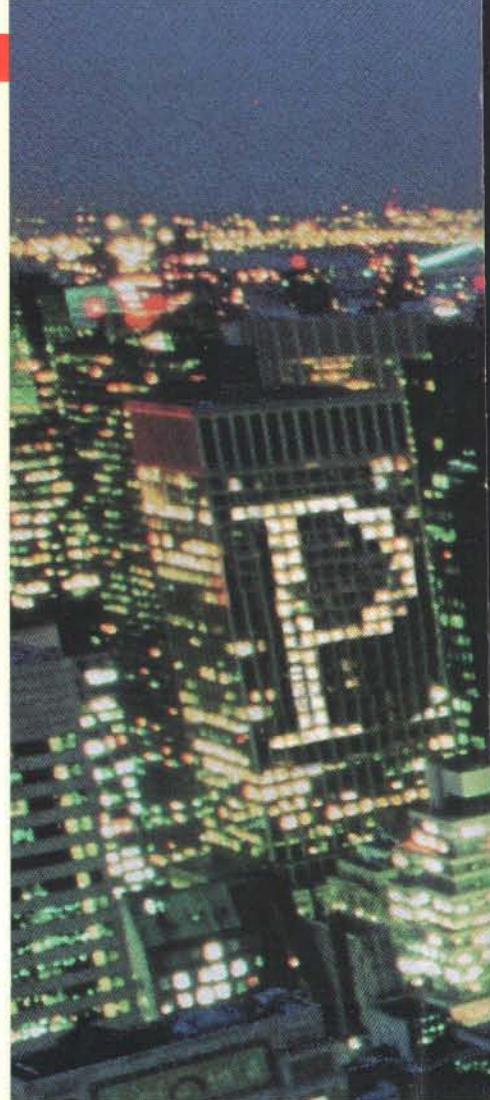
#### Paradox is the best Windows database

	Paradox	Access
Visual data modeling for forms and reports	Yes	No
Object-oriented development environment	Yes	No
Supports SQL pass-through	Yes	No
Built-in workgroup support	Yes	No
Complete Paradox and dBASE file support	Yes	No

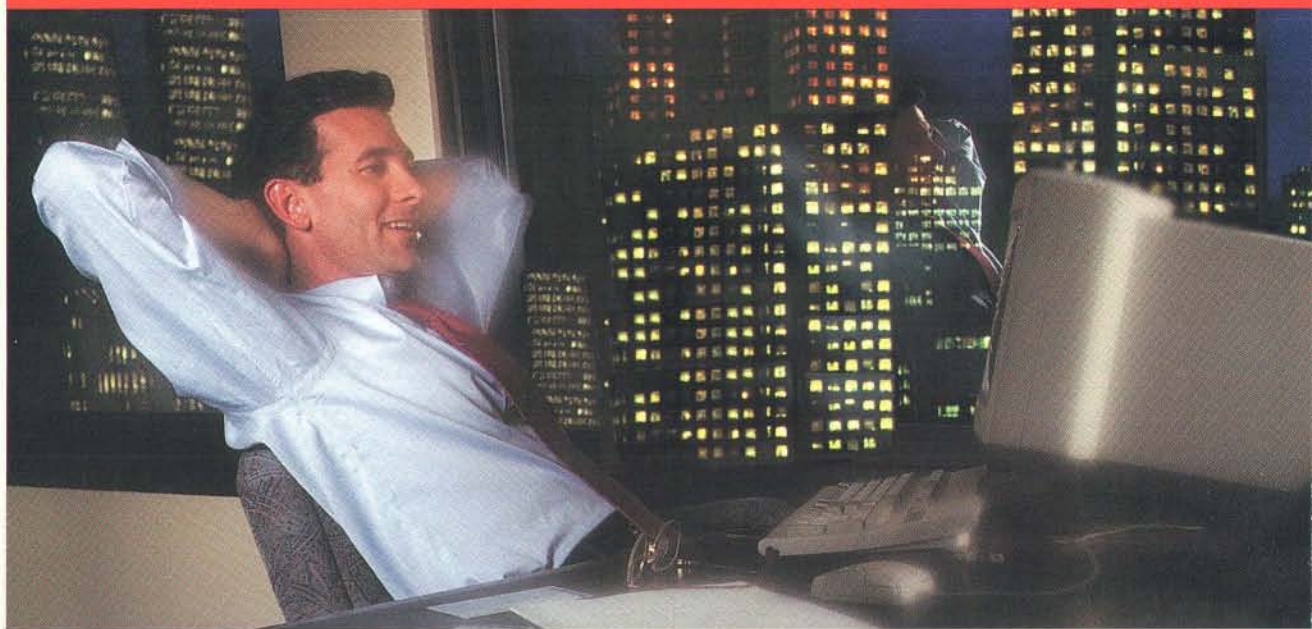
**The future is built in**  
No other Windows database makes so many powerful features so instantly accessible. And with its unique object-oriented design, Paradox for Windows can handle all your expanding information needs, now and in the future.

For power, ease of use and complete connectivity, Paradox works for you, and for corporations everywhere. Get Paradox today, and you'll see why it's the world's #1 selling database.

**Borland**  
*The Upsizing Company*







# Get a look at the #1 selling database in the world

## Real tools for the real world

Every day, people like you are putting Paradox® for Windows to work, and accomplishing a variety of tasks in record time. That's because no other Windows database gives you this much control of your information, and makes it so easy to use. Whether you're managing customer mailings, coordinating inventories, shipping orders, tracking reservations, or providing secure desktop access to corporate data, Paradox helps you get the job done fast.

## Database power starts with ease-of-use

Paradox is easy to use. It was the first PC database to introduce graphical Query By Example to help you get the answers you need from your database quickly and easily. But while Paradox is easy for even novice users to use, there's no limit to its power for application development. With ObjectPAL™, the powerful, object-oriented

programming language included, developers can quickly create full-blown Windows applications.

## All the data is at your command

Only Paradox for Windows gives you seamless access to all the most popular database formats — Paradox for DOS and Windows, dBASE®, and FoxPro. That means you can use all the data available to you.

Even on a network with both DOS and Windows users. It's the easiest way to make the transition to



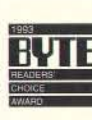
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for Windows  
May 11, 1993



Paradox  
for Windows  
November 1993



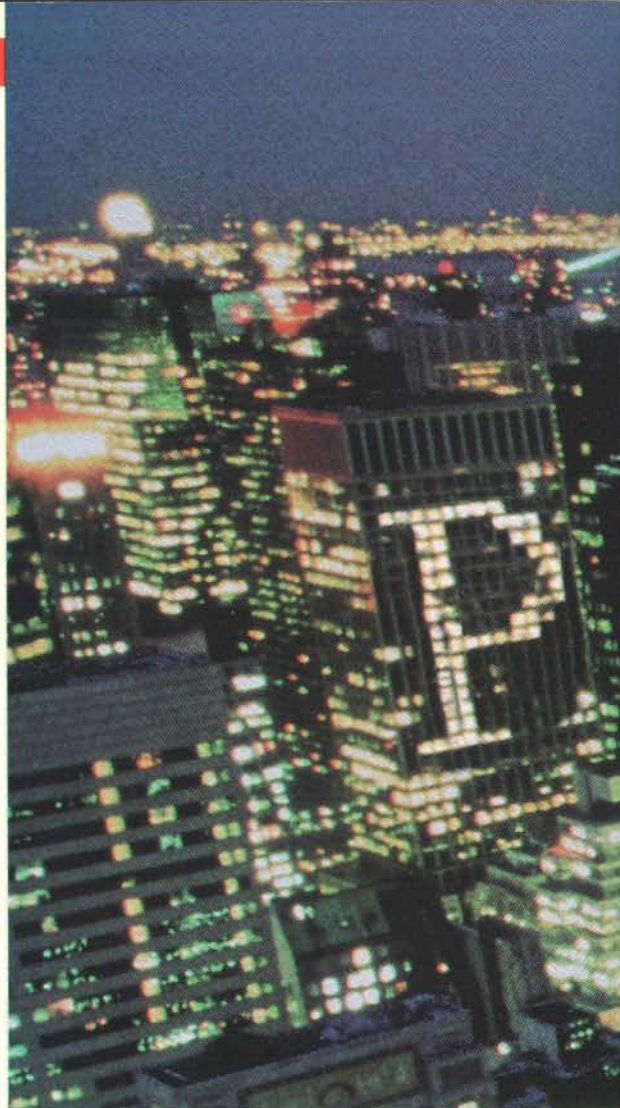
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**Circle 69 on Inquiry Card (RESELLERS: 70).**



# Fast? Economic? Compact? Drive Olivetti Ink-Jet Printers.

**JP 450.**



Colour & black and white

## **JP 450. The top performer.**

Olivetti, the world's No. 3 bubble ink-jet printers producer, presents its tip-toppers: the JP 50, JP 360 and JP 450. Three enhanced

PCL3 printers coming with 30 resident fonts in 29 symbol sets plus 25



Transform the JP 360 or the JP 450 into a colour printer with the Color Kit.

Bitstream Truetype fonts for Windows. The JP 50 is the ideal solution for discerning notebook users. The JP 360 and JP 450

exclusive "Ink-Jet Refilling System", which lets you substitute only the ink cartridge rather than the entire printing head, allows the cost-per-page to be cut by about 40% as compared to traditional monochrome ink-jet printers.

## **JP 50, the truly portable printer.**



1100 g., 30 x 13 x 6 cm; optional 80-page Ni-Cd or 140-page Ni-MH battery pack, car adapter, universal power supply, 10 common batteries: the JP 50 ensures printing autonomy this way, too.



and fast charger. This is the JP 50, the only printer in the world that also operates with common batteries. The quality

Included in the price, 25 Bitstream TrueType fonts. It's another advantage of Olivetti Bubble Ink-Jet printers.

and functionality of a desktop ink-jet printer in less space than the size of a sheet of A4 paper: 300 dpi, 100 cps both in LQ and in Economy Mode, 1,7 ppm throughput and integrated ASF. The answer, in a nutshell, for the businessman on the go. To top all of this off, it comes in a choice of different colours so that you can match it up with your notebook.



## JP 360.



Colour & black and white

**JP 360. The lowest running cost.**

## JP 50.



**JP 50. The truly portable printer.**

**JP 360, the lowest running cost on the market.** If you're looking for price/performance excellence, the printer for you is the JP 360. The Ink-Jet Refilling System allows you to save about 40% in comparison to other ink-jets: something that will be appreciated by those who work in small offices or at home. In addition to this important feature you can reckon with a 70 pages integrated ASF, a 3 ppm throughput, two print speeds (120 cps in LQ



The Ink-Jet Refilling System: an Olivetti exclusive patent.

mode, 180 cps in Draft). Last, but not least, the JP 360 can rapidly turn - in a few seconds - into a colour printer, simply by purchasing the Color Kit.

**JP 450 : everything you could ask for in a printer.** Buying the Color Kit, you can replace the monochrome printing head with a trichrome one to produce colour printouts of exceptional quality. And at twice the speed of the other printers on the market, thanks to the bi-directional printing. But don't let this option dazzle your eyes to the JP 450's

450's brilliant performance in black and white: three printing modes, ultra-flexible paper-feeder (up to 3 individual

Technical Features			
	JP 50	JP 360	JP 450
Max resolution (dpi)	300	300	600x300
Max speed (cps)	100	180	400
cps in LQ mode	100	120	160
ASF capacity	15	70	150
True type scalable fonts	25	25	25
Resident fonts	30	30	30
Page per min. (max)	1,7	3	5
Expansion slot	-	I	I
Colour preset	-	X	X

paper handlers, printouts in different paper weights and sizes) and the 5 ppm throughput that makes it the top performer in its class.

# olivetti

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## News & Views

### GROUPWARE

#### Desktop Conferencing Takes Off .....24

Although not as flashy as full-length feature films on CD-ROM or 3-D virtual reality, desktop conferencing applications can save you time and money.

### ETHERNET NETWORKING

#### Switching Hubs Get Their Due .....28

Somewhat overshadowed by ATM products, Ethernet switching hubs are now getting the respect they deserve.

### PCMCIA STANDARDS

#### The Memory-Card Manager Grows Up .....32

The committee works on a new PCMCIA standard that will add bus mastering, a 32-bit data path, and 3.3-V operation.

### NETWORK BACKUP

#### Vendors Work to Cure Incompatibility Blues .....32

Backup software and hardware vendors hope that a new standard, the System Independent Data Format, will make incompatibility problems obsolete.

### SYSTEM SOFTWARE STRATEGY

#### OS/2 On the PowerPC Slated for This Year .....33

By year-end, IBM plans to release its first Microkernel-based Workplace OS product for the PowerPC, which is, in essence, OS/2 running on the PowerPC.

### PDAS

#### Users: Give Us Connected PDAs with PCMCIA .....34

BYTE interviewed and surveyed about 30 current or former PDA users and came up with a 10-point wish list for next-generation PDAs.

### APPLICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

#### Options for Notes Developers to Improve .....40

Developers frustrated by a limited number of visual-programming tools should see a change this summer.

### NEW PRODUCTS

#### What's New .....288

InterActive Communicator talks back, HotDocs automates document creation, and more.

## Cover Story

### NEW PROCESSORS

#### 80x86 Wars

74

BY TOM R. HALFILL The Intel-based 80x86 continues to dominate the desktop, and it will likely continue with the anticipated introduction of new designs from Intel and its competitors.

NexGen Nx586 Straddles the RISC/CISC Divide—76

BYTE Lab Benchmarks the First P54C Systems—82

An 80x86-Compatible PowerPC?—86



## SPECIAL REPORT: DISTRIBUTED COMPUTING

### DCE: Building the Distributed Future

125

BY MICHAEL D. MILLIKIN The Distributed Computing Environment standard provides the services to make distributed computing manageable, multiplatform, and transparent to users.

### Distributing Data

139

BY JANE RICHTER Although complex, businesses are relying more and more on distributed databases.

### Managing Storage

153

BY ANDY REINHARDT How do you get the most recent, important data where it is needed in a distributed environment?

### Distributed and Secure

165

BY RUSSELL KAY Securing distributed systems starts with controlling access.

### The Changing World of EIS

183

BY KAREN WATTERSON The role of EIS in a distributed environment is uncertain.

### Remote Connections

197

BY MICHAEL NADEAU Access, performance, and data integrity are some of the issues of connecting remote clients.

### Distributed-Computing Resource Guide

206

## Features



### CD-ROM

#### The Fine Art of CD-ROM Publishing

47

BY DICK POUNTAIN The electronic version of the National Gallery collection demonstrates how traditional material can be adapted to new publishing media.

### PROCESSORS

#### Multimedia Powerhouse

57

BY KARL M. GUTTAG The designer of the TI MVP discusses the multimedia functions that drove the design of the chip.

### PRODUCTS

#### 1994 Readers' Choice Awards

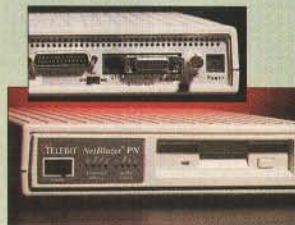
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BYTE readers separate the best from the rest.

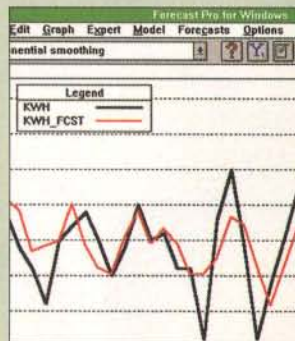
## Reviews



PAGE 209



PAGE 233



PAGE 237

## State of the Art

### INTERNATIONALIZATION

#### Software Goes Global 90

BY RUSSELL KAY

U.S. software developers scramble for a piece of the international pie.





## DESKTOP SYSTEMS

### Power to the New Macs

209

BY TOM THOMPSON

Affordable Power Macs run old 680x0 software surprisingly well. The new Macs save their performance punch for a small but growing number of programs compiled for the PowerPC 601 processor.

## GROUP SCHEDULERS

### Scheduling Across the Enterprise

216

BY BEN SMITH AND HOWARD EGLOWSTEIN

Group-scheduling software relieves some of the tedium and frustration of corporatewide scheduling by accessing the combined calendars of all the people across an organization. The BYTE Lab evaluates six cross-platform schedulers.

## NETWORKS

### Plug-and-Go File Server

227

BY BRUCE DAWSON

As simple to use as an appliance, the FAServer 400 is a fast, affordable NFS file server for TCP/IP networks.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Dial-Up Networking

233

BY BRUCE DAWSON

Telebit's NetBlazer remote routers enable telecommuting. The NetBlazer PN1, a small Ethernet router with a built-in V.32bis modem, supports IP, IPX, and Apple Ethernet protocols.

## BUSINESS SOFTWARE

### Forecasting the Future

237

BY GEORGE STEWART

Business forecasting software predicts future trends—sales projections, inventory levels, energy usage—by incorporating traditional forecasting methods. The four programs reviewed here guide businesspeople through a forecasting session and generate accessible reports and graphs.

## OPERATING SYSTEMS

### Novell's Newest DOS

241

BY TERJE MATHISEN

Is Novell DOS 7 a better DOS than Microsoft's?

## ETHERNET ADAPTERS

### Lab Report:

246

### 66 Ethernet Adapters

We test Ethernet NICs, PCMCIA cards, and parallel-port adapters to find the best networking hardware for desktop and mobile applications.

Best 16-bit NICs—248

Hassle-Free NICs—248

How We Tested—250

Best PCMCIA Cards—252

Best Portable Ethernet Adapters—257

Honorable Mentions—258

Dubious Achievements—258



### Transborder Tips and Traps

93

BY L. CHRIS MILLER

A look at the many technical issues and problems involved in moving software.

Observing the Conventions—96

### Crossing the Cultural Boundary

107

BY KUMIYO NAKAKOJI

Cultural factors impinge on software design.

### Developing Software Overseas

113

BY EDWARD YOURDON

The developing countries are also developing competitive software industries.

Quality: The Hidden Offshore Advantage—114

Software in Russia—118



## Core Technologies

### CPUS

### PowerPC 604 Weighs In.....265

BY BOB RYAN AND TOM

THOMPSON IBM and Motorola's latest CPU outperforms the Pentium.

### OPERATING SYSTEMS

### Retrofitting OS/2 for SMP...267

BY MICHAEL S. KOGAN A new

OS/2 will exploit symmetric multiprocessing hardware.

### NETWORKS

### From Here to There.....271

BY BEN SMITH A look at the growing popularity of the Point-to-Point Protocol.

### PROGRAMMING

### Port Mac Applications to the PowerPC.....273

BY RICK GREHAN Apple finds a way to ease the task of moving programs over to the Power Mac.

## Opinions

### Pournelle:

### A Pentium Is Sounded Out...277

BY JERRY POURNELLE

Sound boards clash with hard drive controllers on new Pentium system.

### Books and CD-ROMs:

### Levels of Secrecy.....41

BY RICK GREHAN, TOM

THOMPSON, RAYMOND GA CÔTÉ, AND SCOTT WALLACE

A look at cryptography, Marvin Minsky on CD-ROM, "plugs," and the visualization of scientific data.

### Commentary:

### Think Multiplatform.....344

BY RAYMOND GA CÔTÉ

A software engineer's perspective of multiplatform applications development.

### Editorial.....9

BY DENNIS ALLEN

### Letters.....18

PowerPCs, the legality of E-mail contracts, a data-highway reality check, and Chicago's effect on software development.

### Reader Survey.....276

### READER SERVICE

Editorial Index by Company	342
Alphabetical Index to Advertisers	338
Index to Advertisers by Product Category	340
Inquiry Reply Cards:	340A

### BUYER'S GUIDE

297

Mail Order  
Hardware/Software Showcase  
Buyer's Mart

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## **DOS/WINDOWS**

### **Developers Debate Stac-Microsoft Trade-Secrets Decision** .....38

Software developers and attorneys debate the ramifications of this important court decision. At issue is the preloading program that integrates data compression into the internal operations of MS-DOS.

### **Options for Notes Developers to Improve** .....40

Notes developers take heart. This summer Lotus plans to release ViP, a Windows-based visual-programming environment for developing graphical front ends for Lotus Notes. ViP is based on a new version of LotusScript, a structured BASIC-compatible programming language.

### **The Fine Art of CD-ROM Publishing** .....47

Microsoft's Art Gallery CD-ROM for Windows reproduces all 2200 paintings from the National Gallery in London. Derived from Micro Gallery, an on-line interactive system located in the National Gallery, the CD-ROM employs animations to explain painting techniques, compositional devices, color schemes, and symbolism used by the painters.

### **80x86 Wars** .....74

New 80x86 chip designs from AMD, Cyrix, and NexGen promise to deliver better performance than Intel's Pentiums while maintaining full compatibility with DOS and Windows software.

### **Scheduling Across the Enterprise** .....216

Group-scheduling software makes it possible to access the combined calendars of all the people across your organization. We take a look at six cross-platform schedulers.

### **Forecasting the Future** .....237

Business forecasting software predicts future trends—sales projections, inventory levels, energy usage—by incorporating traditional forecasting methods. Forecast Pro for Windows wraps all the essential methodologies and forecasting features into an elegant Windows interface.

### **Novell's Newest DOS** .....241

Targeted at existing MS-DOS installations, Novell DOS 7 bills itself as a better DOS than MS-DOS based on the strength of a multitasking kernel, better memory management, improved utilities, and a built-in copy of Personal NetWare, Novell's peer-to-peer network operating system.

### **Pournelle: A Pentium Is Sounded Out** .....277

Jerry takes us through the setup and installation of his new Pentium system and tests out several sound boards and some multimedia packages in the process.

## **OS/2**

### **OS/2 On the PowerPC Slated for 1994** .....33

IBM plans to release its first microkernel-based Workplace OS product for the PowerPC—OS/2 running on the PowerPC—by the end of the year.

### **Retrofitting OS/2 for SMP** ...267

A new version of OS/2 supports 80x86-based symmetric multiprocessing.

## **MACINTOSH**

### **Apple, Cirque Unveil Trackball Alternative** .....33

An alternative to a mouse or trackball, Apple's new trackpad pointing device for its Mac PowerBooks requires only one moving part: your finger.

### **The Fine Art of CD-ROM Publishing** .....47

With its use of animations and a National Gallery guide's high-quality digitized voice, Microsoft's Art Gallery CD-ROM for the Mac and Windows takes you on a tour of the National Gallery in London.

### **Power to the New Macs** .....209

New Power Macs run old Mac applications like old Macs, providing compatibility with reasonable speed. Old Mac applications will run faster as Apple converts more Toolbox calls to native PowerPC code. The real performance payoff comes from applications ported to run native PowerPC instructions.

### **Scheduling Across the Enterprise** .....216

The BYTE Lab tries out six group schedulers with Windows and Macintosh clients. These packages are evaluated for cross-platform and enterprise-wide support, ease of installation and use, feature set, and management functions.

### **Port Mac Applications to the PowerPC** .....273

Apple's Mixed Mode Manager does much to ease the transition to the PowerPC world. It handles switching between native PowerPC routines and routines executed by the 680x0 emulator.

## **UNIX**

### **Plug-and-Go File Server** .....227

The FAServer 400 from Network Appliance is an NFS file server for multivendor Unix networks. A unique file system gives it a speed and reliability advantage over workstation NFS servers.

## **NETWORKS**

### **Switching Hubs Get Their Due** .....28

Ethernet switching hubs are finally coming into their own. Here's a look at what's available and what to look for if you're considering purchasing one.

### **Vendors Work to Cure Incompatibility Blues** .....32

A new standard, called System-Independent Data Format, promises to make network backup incompatibility problems a thing of the past.

### **Special Report: Distributed Computing** .....121

The articles in this special section focus on the six key ingredients to making a distributed network a reality: OSF's Distributed Computing Environment standard, distributed databases, storage management, security, remote connections, and decision-support tools. The bottom line is transparency.

### **Plug-and-Go File Server** .....227

Network Appliance's FAServer is a fast, affordable, stand-alone NFS file server that's easy to install and administer. It may be too fast for slower clients.

### **Dial-Up Networking** .....233

The NetBlazer PNI remote router gives you on-demand routing over PSTN as well as leased lines. It provides inexpensive WAN capability with IP, IPX, and Apple Ethernet protocols.

### **Lab Report: 66 Ethernet Adapters** .....246

Using our application tests, we rank the best network adapters in each technology class—NIC, PCMCIA, and parallel-port—for speed and ease of installation and use on the network.

### **From Here to There** .....271

The Point-to-Point Protocol is gaining in popularity. Based on the HDLC structure (an internationally adopted ISO standard), PPP can carry several different protocols simultaneously. It can be used to extend a LAN to a remote device, to connect to distant segments of a LAN, and even to connect different LANs together (by means of routers).

Alphabet encoding	93
Awards	65
Books	41
CD-ROM	41, 47, 277
CISC	74
Color	47
Communications	24, 197, 233
CPUs	74, 265
Databases	139
DCE	125
Distributed computing	121, 125, 139, 153, 165, 183, 197, 206
DSPs	57
80x86s	74
EISes	183
Ethernet	28, 246
Group schedulers	216
Internationalization	90, 93, 107, 113
ISDN	24
Multimedia	33, 47, 57, 277
Networks	24, 28, 32, 125, 139, 153, 165, 183, 197, 216, 227, 241, 246, 271, 277
NICs	246
Objects	38
Operating systems	33, 241, 267
OS/2	33, 267
Parallel processing	57
PCMCIA	32, 34, 246
PDA's	34
PowerPC	33, 209, 265
Processors	57, 74
Programming	38, 40, 273, 344
Remote access	197, 233
RISC	33, 74, 209, 265
Security	125, 165
Servers	153, 165, 227, 277
Software development	90, 93, 107, 113
Storage	32, 153
Translation	93
Unix	227
Videoconferencing	



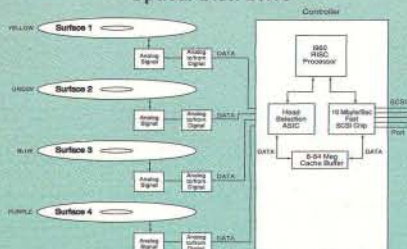
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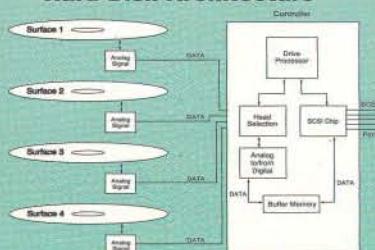
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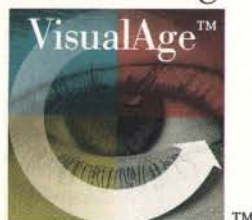






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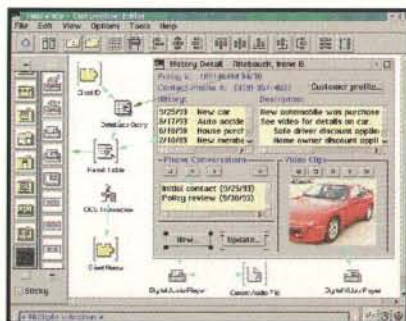
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**Circle 97 on Inquiry Card.**





# Core Technologies in BYTE



**We introduce a new section that will bring you monthly coverage of the four most critical technology topics**

This month, I am proud to introduce a new section in BYTE called Core Technologies. Each month, this new section will bring you specific coverage of four major technology topics: CPUs, operating systems, networks, and programming.

For the section's debut, our CPU coverage (page 265) is on the newest version of the PowerPC, the 100-MHz 604 chip, which promises to be 50 percent faster than Intel's 100-MHz Pentium P54C. Bob Ryan and Tom Thompson, who have closely followed the PowerPC for BYTE, provide a technical overview of the 604's six execution units. Three of those execution units are integer pipelines, and as the authors point out, in the PC world where integer performance is everything, the PowerPC 604 is the first microprocessor to have three pipelines dedicated to integer functions.

Our operating-system coverage (page 267) is on IBM's implementation of SMP (symmetric multiprocessing) in OS/2. No, we're not talking about IBM's Workplace OS, which was designed to support SMP. We're talking about a retrofit of SMP support onto OS/2 2.1. Naturally, IBM had to make some compromises, but as Michael S. Kogan (author of *The Design of OS/2*) points out, OS/2 SMP should deliver real scalability to OS/2 programs.

For our network coverage (page 271), BYTE's Ben Smith provides a primer on PPP (Point-to-Point Protocol), which is popular for long-distance network connections. If you are not familiar with PPP, you'll want to get up to speed with this protocol that is already implemented in many commercial software packages and hardware.

In the programming arena, our coverage (page 273) is on porting Macintosh applications to the PowerPC. Rick Grehan, who is technical director of the BYTE Lab, discusses some changes that programmers need to consider, such as lost support of the 80-bit extended floating-point type, the change from code *segments* to code *fragments*, and mixed-mode programming.

The idea for the Core Technologies section came from BYTE readers, who continually tell us they read BYTE

for the technology. We read that in the mail you sent and in the surveys you answered. We also learned it through the formal focus groups we've had with readers and the many informal dinners we've had with groups of BYTE readers. Again and again, we heard that you are most interested in technology coverage—and you've let us know that accurately covering technology is BYTE's core competency. That's why we are introducing the Core Technologies section, so that each month you can be certain of staying abreast of the four most critical technologies. Frankly, we couldn't be happier. BYTE started its move back to its technical roots just over two years ago, and you've told us that we are on the right track. This June issue indicates our commitment to supply you with the most authoritative information on technology and technology integration possible.

Look at our cover story on the 80x86 wars (page 74), for example. BYTE's senior news editor on the West Coast, Tom R. Halfhill, provides an insightful look at new CPUs from AMD, Cyrix, Intel, and NexGen that promise to extend the life of the 80x86-compatible architecture. Each manufacturer has its own ideas on how to retain compatibility while moving forward with RISC-like features and giving Intel a run for its money.

Also check out our special report on distributed computing (beginning on page 121). We have devoted a large number of pages to topics such as the OSF's Distributed Computing Environment, data distribution, managing storage, security, and remote connections. Given the changing paradigm of enterprise-wide computing, you cannot afford to miss this special report.

Finally, to make sure that we continue to stay in touch with your needs, we ask you to fill out the short questionnaire on page 276 to help us shape our network management coverage for an upcoming issue. Each month, you'll find a similar questionnaire about an upcoming topic. You probably saw the first of these questionnaires in last month's issue. Your answers will greatly help our editors. n

*P.S. I'd like to welcome BYTE Thailand, which debuted in May, as the newest member of the BYTE family.*

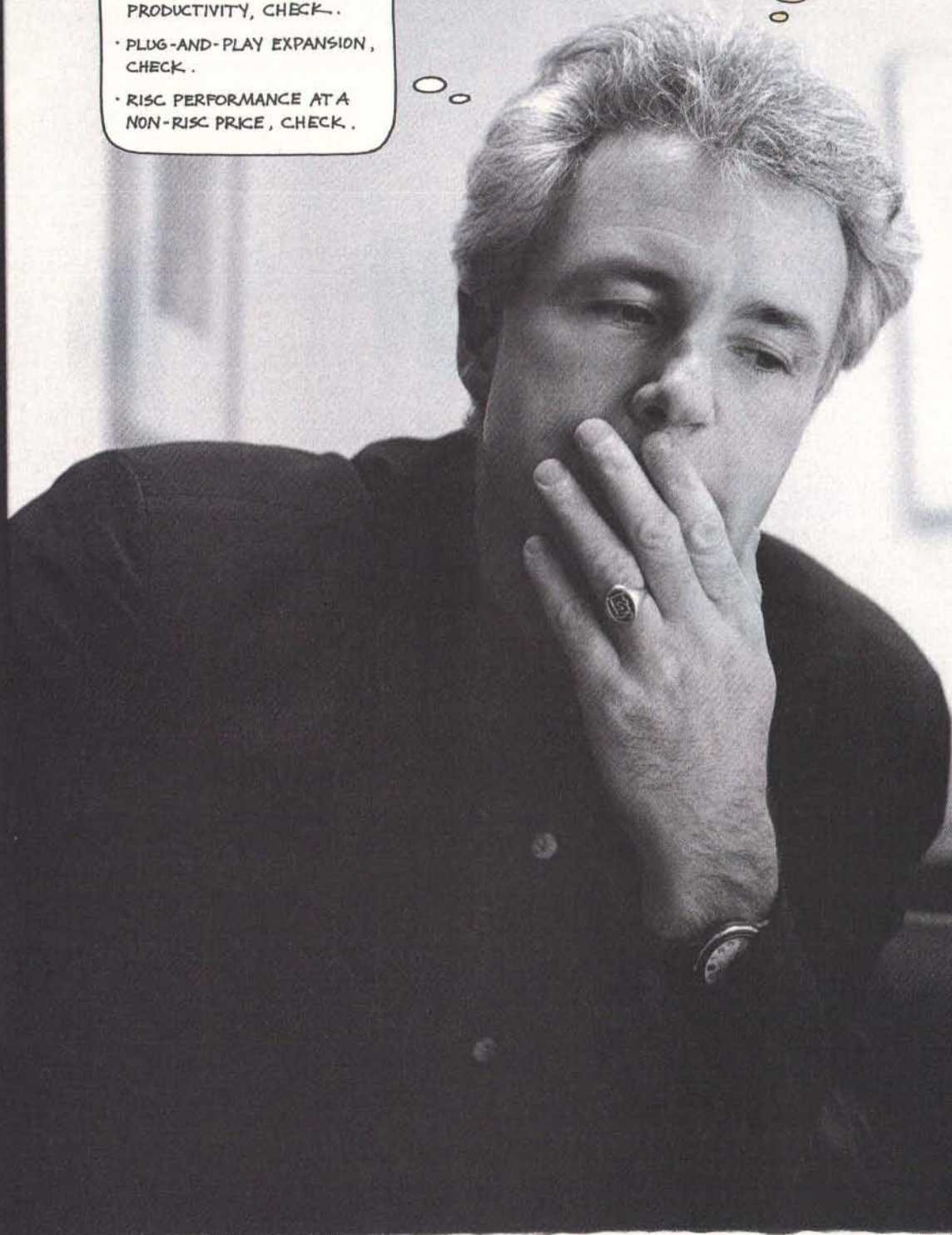
A stylized, handwritten signature of Dennis Allen in black ink.

DENNIS ALLEN, EDITOR IN CHIEF  
(dallen@bix.com)



- OUTPERFORMS 486 AND PENTIUM, CHECK.
- WORKS WITH MS-DOS, CHECK.
- WORKS WITH WINDOWS, CHECK.
- MEETS CORPORATE NETWORK STANDARDS, CHECK.
- INCREASES EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY, CHECK.
- PLUG-AND-PLAY EXPANSION, CHECK.
- RISC PERFORMANCE AT A NON-RISC PRICE, CHECK.

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REALLY COOL STUFF.





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than a PC, more human  
than a Macintosh  
and designed to work  
with both?



PowerPC systems for less than \$2,500 running Macintosh, Windows, DOS and native applications that make Pentium look like a draft horse."

This is just the latest example of Apple's commitment to making it easier for MS-DOS and Windows users to take advantage of Macintosh innovations—without sacrificing the investments they've already made in PC technology.

### **The power of RISC for as little as \$1,819.\***

The whole computer industry is buzzing about the potential of RISC technology in PCs.

"My next computer will be a PowerPC. I was using Intel-based machines long before the PC was a glimmer in IBM's eye, but as Emerson said, foolishly held consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.... It's time for a change, and the time is now," wrote Bill Machrone in *PC Week*. "That next machine will probably wear an Apple logo.... Apple appears to be a good six months ahead of IBM in terms of [PowerPC] product development and software integration."

Plug-and-play Ethernet networking is standard. So is plug-and-play expansion capability. So is CD-quality sound. Put it all together, and you've got a whole new way to think about Macintosh.

### **The power of the future.**

You can hardly pick up a magazine these days without reading about how the worlds of video, sound, telephones and computers are coming together. About new developments like speech recognition, desk-to-desk videoconferencing and integrated voice mail. About how documents of the future will include not just text, num-

### **Software accelerated for Power Macintosh.**

*This is just a fraction of the software that is now or soon will be available in versions accelerated for Power Macintosh.*

ACI 4th Dimension	Macromedia Authorware Professional
Adobe Illustrator	Macromedia Director
Adobe Photoshop	Macromedia MacroModel
Adobe Premiere	Microsoft Excel
Agfa-Gevaert N.V.	Microsoft Word
Aldus FreeHand	Nisus Writer 4.0
Aldus PageMaker	Oracle7
Aldus Persuasion	QuarkXPress
Alias Sketch!	Radius RocketShare
auto•des•sys form•Z	Radius VideoVision Studio
Claris ClarisWorks	RasterOps Horizon 24
ClarisImpact	Ray Dream Designer
Electric Image Animation System	Scitex Corporation Ltd.
Fractal Design Painter	Specular International Infini-D
Frame FrameMaker	Strata StudioPro
Graphisoft ArchiCAD	SuperMac cards and peripherals
Great Plains Dynamics Release Two	VideoFusion
Insignia Solutions SoftWindows	Virtus WalkThrough
Language Engineering LogoVista E to J	Wolfram Research Mathematica
Leaf Systems	WordPerfect 3.0
Lotus cc:Mail	WordPerfect Office

bers and graphics, but sound, video clips and animation.

To make the most of these vast new capabilities, you'll need to have the power of RISC technology—and the simplicity of Macintosh.

Of course, there's no better way to understand the power of Power Macintosh than to try one today at your authorized Apple reseller (for the name of one located near you, call 800-732-3131, ext. 600).

And see just how much more power a Macintosh can give you. The power to be your best.®

## **Introducing Power Macintosh.**





# Think of it as the Macintosh for people who thought they could never have a Macintosh.

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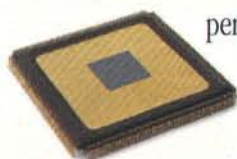
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At the heart of Power Macintosh is the PowerPC™ 601 microprocessor: the first of a new family of ultra-high-performance RISC chips developed in a unique three-year collaboration between Apple, IBM and Motorola.



*The PowerPC 601 has a lot of power inside it: the combined resources of IBM, Motorola and Apple.*

RISC technology brings a whole new level of performance to personal computing. Software written to take advantage of its unique capabilities, in fact, will blow the doors off the same programs written for 486 PCs—and will run significantly faster than programs for Pentium processor-based PCs.

RISC technology makes everything work faster: from 3-D modeling applications that require

*From left, the Power Macintosh 8100/80, Power Macintosh 7100/66 and Power Macintosh 6100/60.*



Power Macintosh	6100/60	7100/66	8100/80
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Speed	60 MHz	66 MHz	80 MHz
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Expansion slots	1 PDS or NuBus	3 NuBus	3 NuBus
Hard disk storage	160MB or 250MB	250MB or 500MB	250MB to 1GB
Video support	DRAM	DRAM, VRAM 1MB to 2MB	DRAM, VRAM 2MB to 4MB
Networking	Ethernet	Ethernet	Ethernet
Apple Price	From \$1,819	From \$2,899	From \$4,249

*All this plus built-in Macintosh PC Exchange, AppleScript, QuickTime software, TrueType® fonts, GeoPort serial ports, 16-bit stereo audio input and output, file sharing without a dedicated server and more.*

floating-point computations to basic business software.

Combine the increased power of RISC with the practical simplicity of a Macintosh, and the result is more work done in less time, with lower training and support costs.

## The power to run MS-DOS, Windows and Macintosh software.

Many Power Macintosh configurations come bundled with SoftWindows, a software innovation that enables Power Macintosh to run hundreds of off-the-shelf MS-DOS and Windows programs at 386 and 486 performance levels. (Of course, every Power Macintosh can run thousands of Macintosh personal productivity programs, too.)

But that's just the beginning. "By the end of 1994," wrote *PC/Computing*, "you'll see



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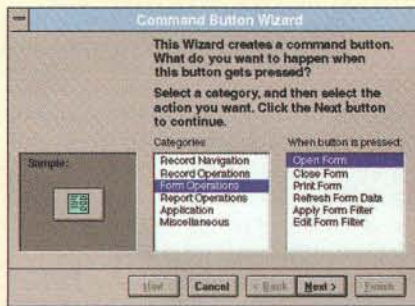
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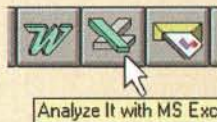


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## Powerful PowerPC Coverage

You have once again proven to be the best journal in the field. Your coverage of the Power Mac hardware (April) left all I read in the Mac magazines and what information I could get out of an Apple representative far behind. Thanks for the work.

Martin Rommel  
Cambridge, MA

I would like to compliment Tom Thompson and Bob Ryan on their superb cover story on the new PowerPCs. The article was completely objective, mentioning that the Power Macs are powerful but don't outperform most workstations. And what I find most pleasing is the depth of the coverage on the systems to be released by IBM's Power Personal Systems division. I have yet to see any other periodical discuss these systems and their PReP (PowerPC Reference Platform) specification with as much detail and accuracy as does BYTE.

Pooya Hemami  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

## Virtual Conversation on Virtual Legality

I agree with attorney Victor Cosentino (March Commentary) that E-mail contracts would be easy to fake. However, everyday voice-phone transactions are made and memorialized, if at all, on scrawled bits of paper with the potential of being ambiguous and self-serving. Yet the vast majority of oral contracts follow through to mutually successful conclusions because most people are in business not only to make money but to stay in business. That depends on a reputation for keeping your word and delivering acceptable quality. Cosentino's specific advice, "E-mail should not be used to create a contract" is just backward and unhelpful. He could have been more helpful by telling people how to structure E-mail transactions, so problems of proof and payment can be avoided.

Jim Upchurch  
Montgomery, AL

*Many of the points you raise are correct; nevertheless, I stand by what I said. Voice phone is a good way to initiate and negotiate contracts, but when a contract involves the sale of goods*

*valued at more than \$500, most states have laws specifically stating that such contracts must be in writing and signed in order for them to be enforceable. The bottom line is that as a businessperson, you need to know the risks inherent in the way you run your business, including the possibility that someone might stiff you on an E-mail contract that is not enforceable in court.*

—Victor Cosentino

In "Virtual Legality," Victor Cosentino concludes that a contract formed through the exchange of E-mail, without a cryptographic "digital signature" is probably not legally enforceable. With all professional respect, I disagree. First, although the statute of frauds requires certain contracts to be "signed," the law generally understands that word to be flexible. The law does not require that symbol to be secure against forgery, and many courts have held that simple telegrams are signed. Second, to enforce an E-mail message, you must prove its origin, but that does not necessarily require a digital signature. A famous example occurred in the Iran-contra trial of Admiral John Poindexter. In none of these cases was the message in question authenticated with a digital signature but rather on the basis of a log-on password used to send the message and, more important, the facts and circumstances of the case (e.g., testimony from a witness: "He told me he was going to send me E-mail, and then I received this message..."). Readers should, of course, consult their own lawyers.

Benjamin Wright  
Author of *The Law of Electronic Commerce: EDI, Fax, and E-mail*  
(Little, Brown and Company, 1992)  
Dallas, TX

*Recognizing Wright's expertise in the field, I maintain that E-mail agreements (within the statute of frauds) are probably unenforceable in court. Although the court does interpret "signed" broadly, it would be a great mistake to accept the "from" field in plain-text E-mail as a signature. Taken out of the network, an E-mail message is just editable text, easily fabricated. The comparison to telegrams seems inappropriate. Telegrams are relatively trustworthy, because individuals must*

*go through an intermediary that delivers a fairly unalterable hard copy to the recipient. And the Poindexter case involved multiple messages sent over a long period of time rather than just those necessary to make an offer and acceptance. Furthermore, those messages were sent and received within a government communications network designed for top federal administrative officials rather than the anarchic Internet whose standards are designed to support the lowest common denominator. Also, in that case, the E-mail message was not considered under the strict sense of the statute of fraud. The gist of my article was the presence of unquantified and unidentified risk of which users may not be aware. Perhaps, the risk is quite small. However, unless the potential loss is also small, contracting by E-mail is a risk I advise my clients not to take.*

—Victor Cosentino

## ¡Hola, Amigos!

With all this talk of the free trade agreement, you'd think mail-order companies would take advantage of the right-next-door million-dollar market of Mexico by providing toll-free numbers for direct buyers. The opposite is true. In a study conducted of more than 50 computer publications that we receive at the University of Mayab, we found only one international toll-free number out of over 300 direct-sales companies. Interestingly enough, that one is a flourishing Texas company, which assured us it has been selling directly to Mexico for over five years with great success and profit. Computer companies across America, "drop us a line," and if it's toll-free, all the better.

James Mulford  
Vice President, University of Mayab  
Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico

## Development Much Needed on the Data Highway

I have been a long-time, hard-core computer user for over 15 years in the international environment. I have moved more

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than 10 times from one country to another, and my job requires that I travel to more than 17 countries. I feel it's the small things that have to get straightened out first for the traveling "road warrior." It's fine to talk about how to get video and sound across continents (March cover story), but our first concern should be, How will we plug into this network? So let's get back to basics. For each city I travel to, I have to research what the nearest dial-in access point is. In the Boston area, I couldn't tell you if Boxborough, Stow, or Cambridge is closer to Westford or to Maynard. Perhaps a simple reality check would be for an American to travel from Boston, Massachusetts, to Bangor, Maine. If he or she can send an E-mail message in 3 minutes or less on arrival at either location, we'll be ready to start talking about how best to take advantage of fiber-link bandwidths.

Alan Scarboro  
Geneva, Switzerland

I have read with fascination about the information super highway in recent BYTE issues. Being a resident of Kenya, where it's difficult to get a clear phone line (dedicated or not) to the next building, let alone the next town, BYTE sure puts things in perspective.

Jerry Tribe  
Nairobi, Kenya

Technically, your data-highway article is up to the good standards I expect from BYTE. But socially? There's enthusiastic, multipage descriptions of commercial plans, profit making for vendors, and spending opportunities for affluent consumers. But where did the promised social issues (e.g., how it should be built) go?

Usage-based billing, as intended by tollway builders, puts pressure on users to reduce their connection time. One fee for unlimited connection, as today on the Internet, makes people adapt an "it's paid for, use it" mentality. This leads to the strong participation that has made the unique culture of the Internet. I have the impression that the government has chickened out in front of politically motivated cost-cutters and industry lobbyists. The citizens are again going to be the losers. Gore's vision of information bettering society looks hollow when you consider how one-sided it is being implemented.

Neil Franklin  
Winterthur, Switzerland

## In Need of a New Paradigm

Mobile computing has reached critical mass, and yet I have been disenchanted with coverage in BYTE and in other PC magazines regarding this major emerging product category for several years. You tend to treat mobile PCs as if they were desktop systems, but somehow less. In fact, they are very different, and it would be most helpful to judge them against a mobile paradigm. Yet with your desktop bias, you give short shrift to technologies that differentiate these smaller systems, even as you heap praise on all their desktop-like attributes. Take PCMCIA, for example. Yes, PCMCIA has growing pains and compatibility problems today, but the topic also cries out for serious and continuous coverage, and except for fax/modem and network-adaptor announcements, it is not getting that coverage from BYTE.

Frank Keresztes-Fischer  
Brighton, MI

*When evaluating portable computers, we use and heavily rate criteria that are important to mobile users. For instance, in the March lab report on portables, we evaluate size, weight, battery life, communications tools, and pointing devices. We also stress the importance of a portable's ability to connect to external monitors, its suitability for giving presentations, and availability of PCMCIA slots. Furthermore, we use a notebook computer as the base-*

*line system when comparing benchmark results. —Eds.*

## Chicago: An Ambitious Compromise

I enjoyed reading your informative article on Chicago (March News & Views). The article mentions Eicon Technology's NABIOS redirector as an example of the kinds of services that will perpetuate DOS dependencies in Chicago. While this is true today, Eicon has recognized the limitations of TSRs in the Windows environment. We have developed a DLL version of the NABIOS redirector (named ECLAN) and will include it in all new products. Users of our Windows applications will no longer need to load TSRs to access the InterConnect Server family.

Lionel Gibbons  
Director of Product Management  
Eicon Technology  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

## FIXES

In "Building the Data Highway" (March), we said TCP/IP is a routed, connectionless datagram protocol. IP is connectionless, but TCP is not; thus, TCP riding on IP is not connectionless, although UDP/IP is.

In our March letters page, we incorrectly expanded the acronym NIC to network interface card. Instead, it should have read the Network Information Center, which distributes ranges of IP addresses. ■

## COMING UP IN JULY

### • PARALLEL PROCESSING

The TAOS operating system harnesses the power of multiprocessors, even processors with different architectures.

### • GROUPWARE APPLICATIONS

Are the work-flow processes worth the reengineering effort?

### • NETWORK MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

The BYTE Lab evaluates inventory control, remote configuration, software metering, deployment, and LAN monitoring, as well as diagnostic and repair utilities.

### • 27 V.FAST AND V.32TERBO MODEMS

Just how fast are they? How well do they hold a line? Fax? Interoperate?

### • TECHNICAL DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

Does your company manage technical documents effectively and efficiently? We examine ways to do so.

### • DATA ACQUISITION TOOLS

Controlling data acquisition hardware from Windows may not be as simple as vendors would have you think.



# CIC's New Handwriter® Includes YPad: The Electronic Note-Taker

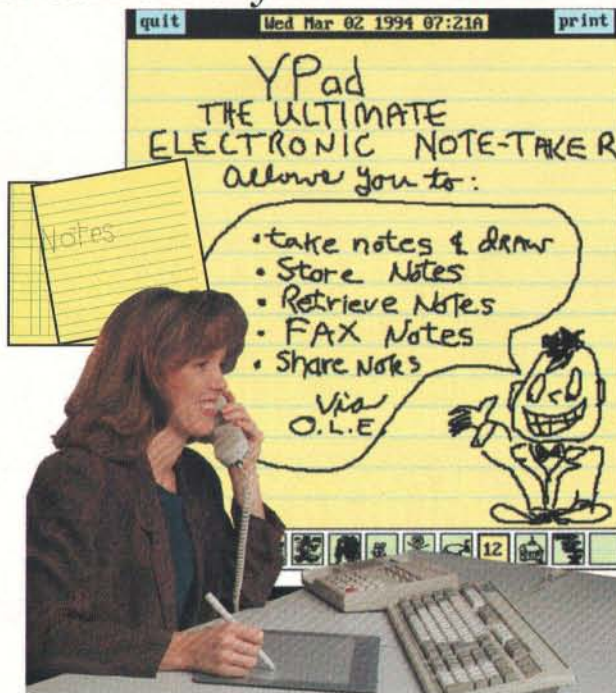
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HANDWRITER VERSION ALSO AVAILABLE FOR DOS AND MAC

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March 1994, PC COMPUTING

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Our previous version is a worldwide bestseller. CIC now includes the new Handwriter Recognizer version 4.0, which is more robust, faster, and allows natural writing.

## Handwriter® VERSION 1.5 INCLUDES:

**NEW** YPad note-taker, **NEW** Handwriter Recognition System software, **NEW** SVGA support, **NEW** mouse-replacement driver for DOS, Microsoft Pen Extensions for Windows, a screen saver with Signature Verification, Crossword puzzles (and a way to get more), an ultra-thin/ultra-light tablet that plugs into your serial port, and a cordless electronic pen. Priced separately, YPad and the new Handwriter for Windows are an outstanding value at \$600. But to encourage you to order ...

## THE ULTIMATE EDITING TOOL

Gestures are special pen strokes that perform specific editing functions, such as the cut gesture for deleting selected text.

Gestures are special pen strokes that perform specific editing functions.

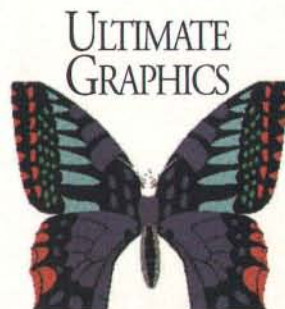
You spend at least 80% of your document-creating time editing. Highlighting, changing words with gestures you already know, moving text, spellchecking, pointing and clicking will make your pen the ultimate keyboard complement.

## THE ULTIMATE PHYSICAL THERAPIST



Tired of hurting, sitting in a rigid, cramped position using the mouse? Are

you really getting paid enough to suffer? 56% of all OSHA reported injuries are RSI, or Repetitive Stress Illnesses. The recommended physical therapy for wrist and tendon problems is making a fist. Kind of like you'd do holding a pen. Pen computing is a very healthy complement to your computer keyboard. And to your life.



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## ULTIMATE SECURITY: YOUR SIGNATURE



Why try to remember all those different passwords — and changing them periodically — when Handwriter for Windows comes with signature-verification security built into a screen saver? People may try to trace your signature, but it's virtually impossible for them to duplicate the stroke dynamics you used to write it. Signature-verification security makes a Handwriter the ultimate complement to your keyboard, especially in environments where many people have potential access to work areas.

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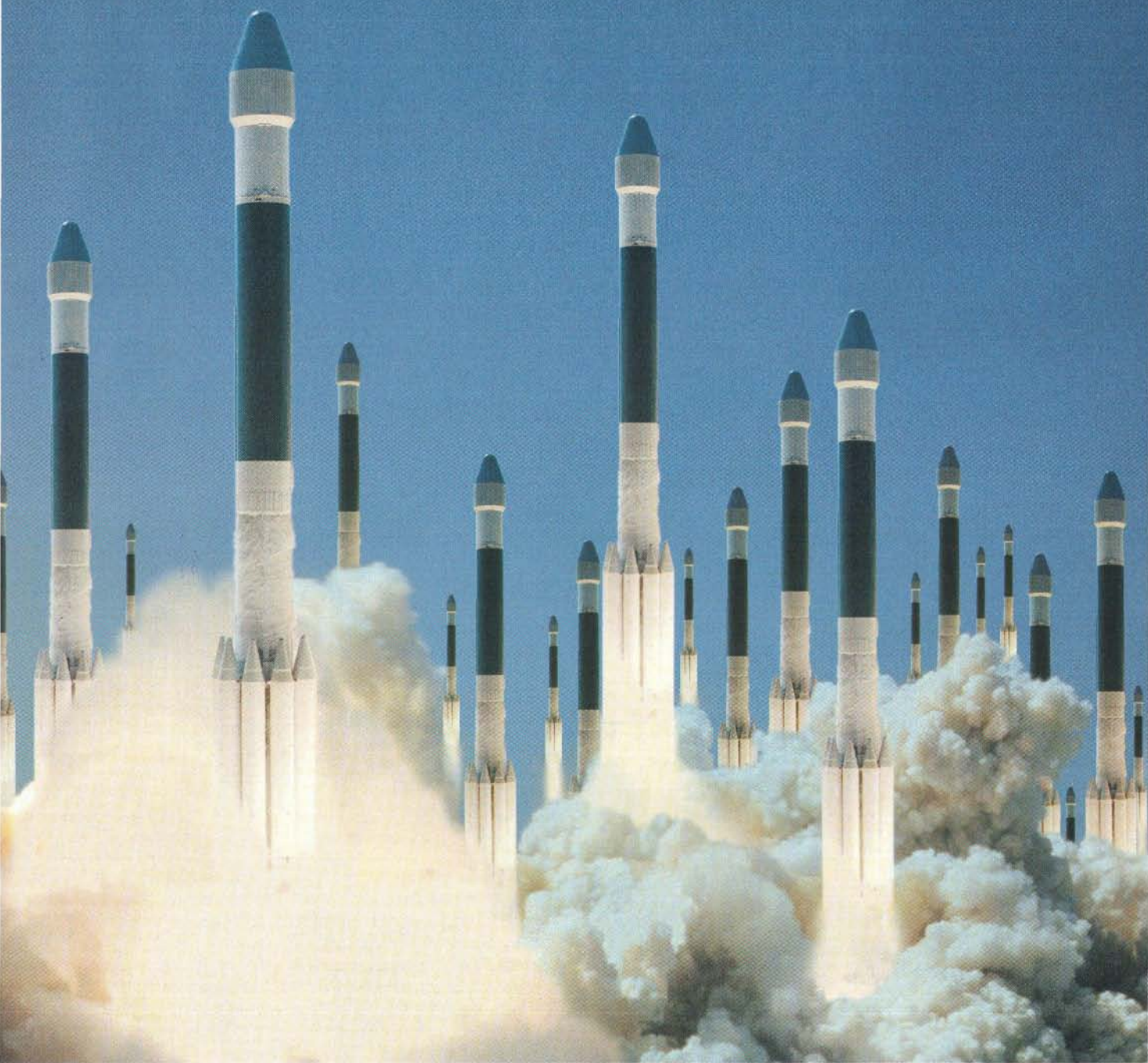



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# News & Views

## VIDEOCONFERENCING

# Desktop Conferencing Takes Off

**Update: A new round of desktop conferencing products foster group collaboration and could fuel demand for ISDN**

ANDY REINHARDT

**H**ardly a month goes by without a new product introduction in the fast-growing desktop videoconferencing and document conferencing market. Once merely a whizbang technology seen in cartoons or at world's fairs (see "Video Conquers the Desktop," September 1993 BYTE), desktop conferencing applications, whether video-based or document-sharing only, are emerging as a real business productivity tool.

Among the most noteworthy new entrants is a family of products from Intel ((408) 765-8080) called ProShare Personal Conferencing. The entry-level Standard Edition sells for \$99. It's a software-only solution that allows shared whiteboarding and documents, but no video, over an ISDN or analog telephone line.

The Standard Edition lets one user own a document; the other user sees a bit map of it that can be annotated and saved locally as an image file. Intel plans to release this month a Premier Edition (\$299) of ProShare that adds applications sharing, so that two users can work on a live document simultaneously.

Intel's top-of-the-line Video System 200 adds support for a video window and thus requires ISDN or a network connection.

The \$2499 package includes

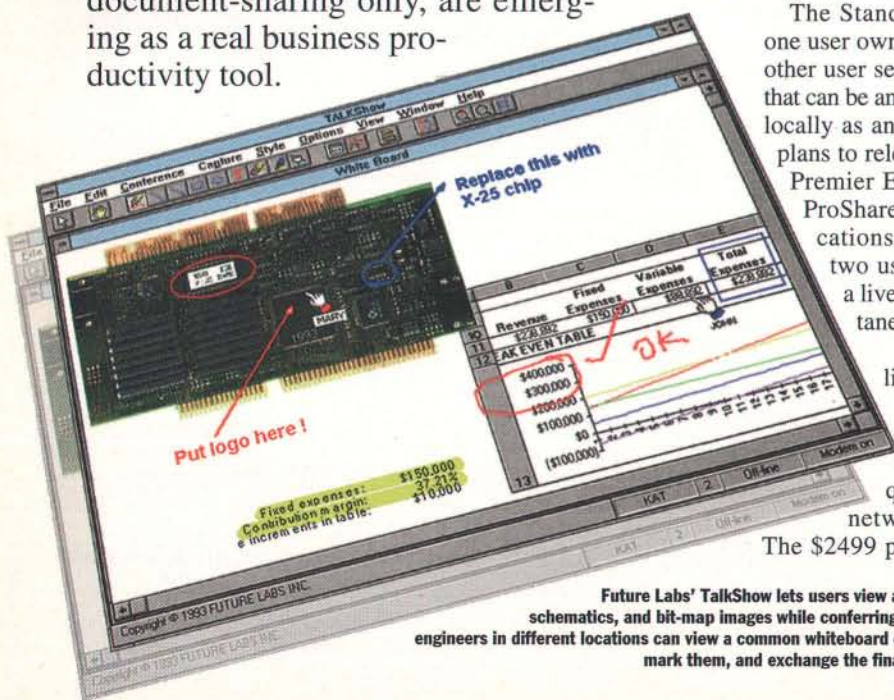
ISA data compression/decompression and ISDN cards, a small video camera, an earphone, a microphone, and software. Some regional telephone companies will distribute the product, including Pacific Bell, which says it will sell Intel's package for \$999 to customers who subscribe to a new ISDN line.

Intel has hinted that it will support other platforms with ProShare, including the Mac. The company is leading an effort to develop cross-platform interoperability standards for desktop videoconferencing.

A competitor to ProShare comes from start-up Nuts Technologies (San Jose, CA, (408) 441-2166, and Hong Kong), whose Connect 918 (\$4299; \$5899 with the ISDN card) offers document sharing, file transfer, a shared whiteboard, and videoconferencing. The program currently runs on the Mac. A Windows version that is planned for release this spring will let Mac and Windows users hold desktop conferences. Connect 918 runs over LANs or ISDN or analog telephone lines.

Connect 918 includes an H.261-based compression/decompression board, a microphone and loudspeaker, a camera, and an optional ISDN terminal adapter. The latest Mac version (a Windows follow-up is also planned) adds resizable windows and the ability to change the frame rate during a session. In the future, Nuts aims to support more than two users at once in a shared session.

Other competitors include InVision from InVision Systems (Vienna, VA, (703) 506-0094) and NTV from Peregrine Systems (Carlsbad, CA, (619) 431-2400). Both companies' products operate in Windows and make extensive use of desktop standards. InVision combines videoconferencing and document conferencing, uses TCP/IP protocols, and supports a wide range of LANs and WANs (wide-area networks). It now uses Action Media II (i.e., DVI) data compression and will reportedly



Future Labs' TalkShow lets users view and update documents, schematics, and bit-map images while conferring on the telephone. Two engineers in different locations can view a common whiteboard of selected documents, mark them, and exchange the final modified documents.



support H.261 compression in the future.

NTV now works only over LANs and uses Microsoft's Video for Windows as its video format. For a full conferencing and screen-sharing system, you equip a standard 386DX/25 or higher computer with off-the-shelf video- and audio-capture boards, as well as a camera (e.g., the VideoLabs Flexcam), microphone, and speakers. For systems that only receive video and do screen sharing, you can skip the video-capture card because Video for Windows can decompress in software. NTV sells for \$299. According to Peregrine, this means you can add a complete videoconferencing system to a PC for less than \$1000 per seat, assuming a \$250 camera, \$300 video card, \$15 for a microphone/headset, and \$100 for a network card.

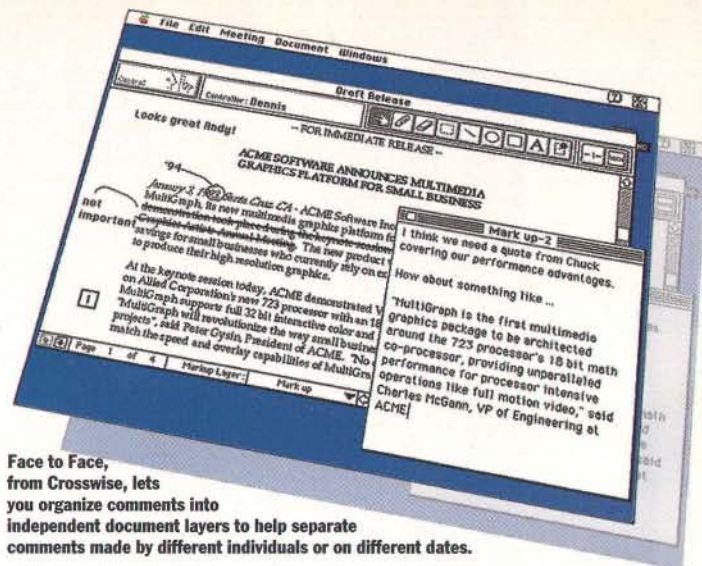
For systems integrators who are looking to create their own videoconferencing solutions, Optibase (Dallas, TX, (214) 386-2040, and Herzliya, Israel) sells the Superboard, an SVGA video card with NTSC and PAL video input, an IIT H.261 codec, MPEG and JPEG compression support, a fax modem, and a bundled Windows DLL for custom-developed applications.

SunSolutions (Mountain View, CA, (415) 336-4567), a Sun Microsystems company, has plans this year to port Show Me 2.0 from its Solaris/SPARC base to Solaris 80x86, Unix

variants on Hewlett-Packard and IBM RISC workstations, and Windows. Show Me 2.0 supports videoconferencing, audioconferencing, document and applications sharing, and whiteboarding. Prices range from \$899 to \$3270 for a single-user license.

In the Solaris/SPARC, AIX RS/6000, and HP-UX environments, InSoft's Communique supports shared whiteboarding, shared applications, and videoconferencing. InSoft (Mechanicsburg, PA, (717) 730-9501) is promoting its own API for cross-platform videoconferencing, called DVE (Digital Video Everywhere), and plans to release by July versions of its software for Windows and Windows NT on DEC Alpha systems.

Desktop conferencing does not require video, however. Many vendors contend that workgroup applications that provide audioconferencing and document sharing only—without the “bobbing heads” you often get in digital video applications—offer a cost-effective way for people to collaborate. One solution that eschews the video window is Face to Face from Crosswise (Santa Cruz, CA, (408) 459-9060). The software, which Crosswise claims is the first such package to interoperate between Windows and the Mac, costs \$295. It runs on AppleTalk LANs or ISDN or analog telephone lines. Face to Face lets two users view and annotate



**Face to Face, from Crosswise, lets you organize comments into independent document layers to help separate comments made by different individuals or on different dates.**

documents as they talk on the phone. It includes an address book, a control panel, and meeting management. For record keeping, a file is automatically generated for each session that includes the names of the participants, copies of the shared documents, and all annotations. Crosswise has established partnerships with Apple and Pacific Bell.

Another contender in software-only conferencing is TalkShow from Future Labs (Los Altos, CA, (415) 254-9000), which now runs only on Windows. Version 2.0 adds support for WANs (via TCP/IP and IPX protocols), whereas before it ran only on NetBIOS, and accommodates multiple users in a single session. It also supports more graphics file formats and JPEG image compression. One of the most at-

tractive aspects of the \$199 package is that you can distribute an unlimited number of temporary “guest” copies to remote users who want to participate in a document conference but don’t own TalkShow. Another software-only contender comes from WorldLinX (Toronto, Ontario, Canada, (416) 350-1000), which sells the \$195 Vis-a-Vis in DOS, Windows, and Mac versions.

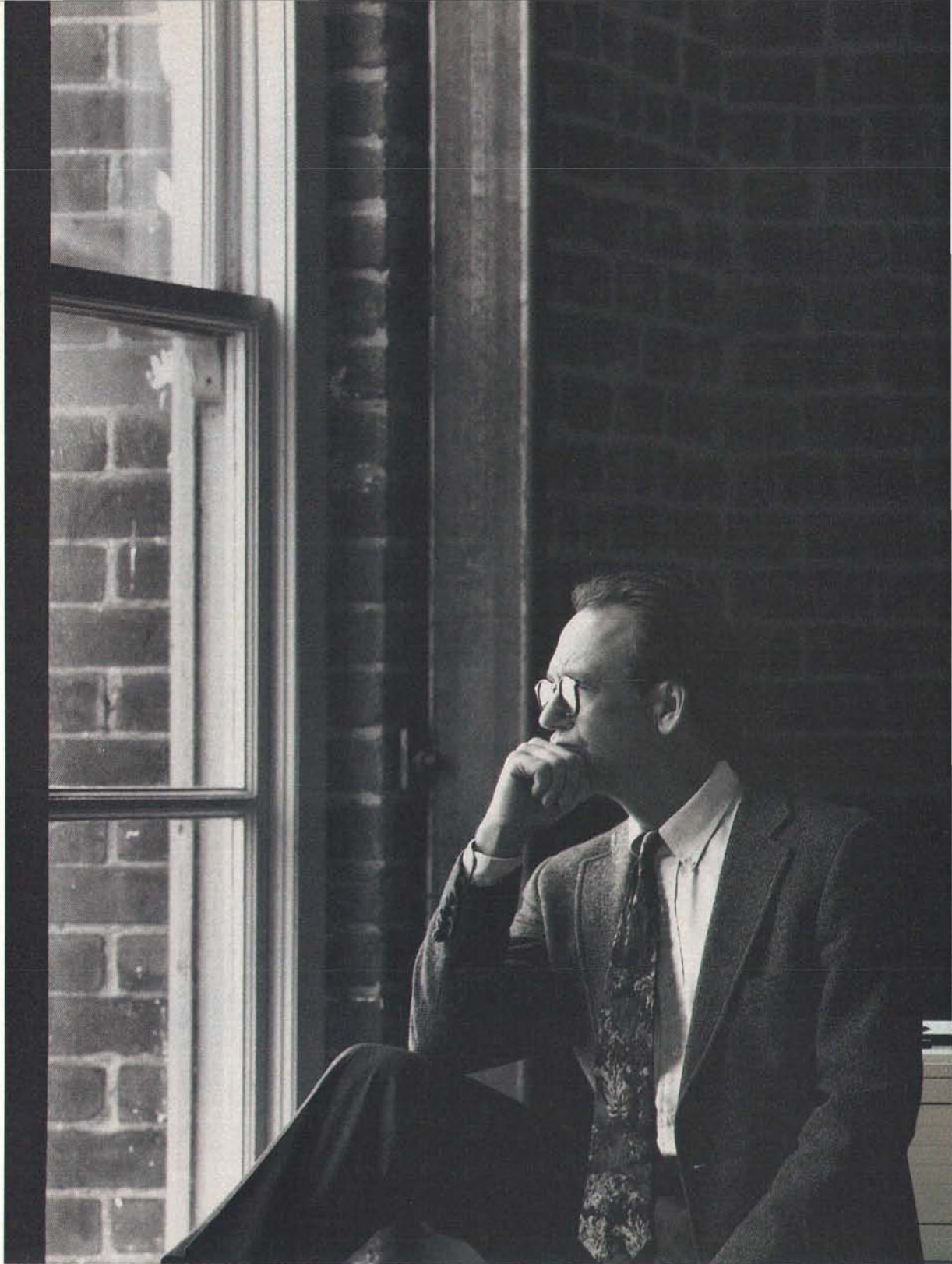
The emergence of better and less expensive compression technologies, widely installed networks and ISDN lines, and a growing demand for collaborative computing tools have thrust video and audiographic applications into the spotlight. After years of evangelizing ISDN, U.S. phone companies may finally have the “killer application” that will stimulate demand for digital telephony.

## Standards Efforts Aim to Ease Incompatibilities

Several standards efforts are under way in the conferencing market, aimed at enabling interoperability, creating opportunities for new vendors, and pulling down prices. Driven by some of the biggest names in the business, including Intel, Lotus, AT&T, Hewlett-Packard, and MCI, these specifications will help fuel acceptance of desktop videoconferencing and document conferencing.

Standard	Purpose	Pros	Cons
H.320	Describes video compression, audio, and call setup formats.	International standard.	Complex; expensive to implement; requires switched digital services like ISDN.
Intel Personal Conferencing Specification	Describes audio, document, data-compression, and cross-platform file standards.	Supports video software decompression due to Intel's Indeo video technology.	Not supported by Apple or IBM.
Consortium for Audiographics Teleconferencing Standards	Working to promote the ITU-TSS standard T.120 multipoint audiographic conferencing standard.	Cross-platform; network independent.	Requires two separate analog telephone lines.
AT&T Paradyne's VoiceSpan (also known as Simultaneous Voice/Data)	Technology for audiographic conferencing that splits a single analog telephone line into two virtual channels.	Multipoint; allows simultaneous audio and data transmission.	Audio quality; data-transmission speed can degrade.
Radish Communications Systems' VoiceView	Technology for multiplexing voice and data over a single analog telephone line.	Can be added to some existing modems through firmware upgrade; inexpensive; backed by Microsoft.	Voice and data not simultaneous.





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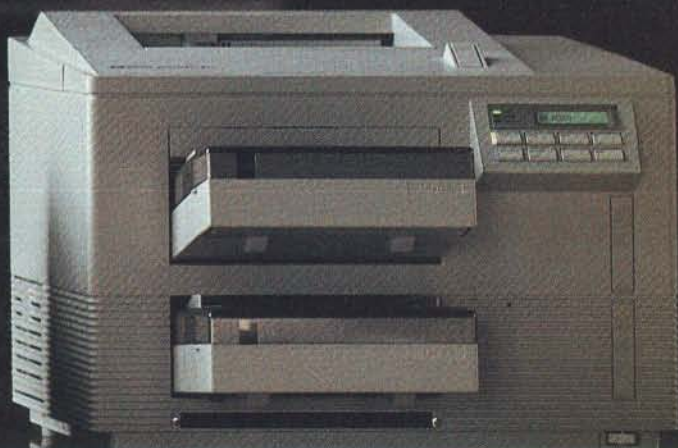
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## ETHERNET NETWORKING

## Switching Hubs Get Their Due

When it comes to providing bandwidth for applications like multimedia and video over LANs, ATM (Asynchronous Transfer Mode) gets all the attention. Somewhat overshadowed by ATM products, although now starting to get the respect they deserve, are Ethernet switching hubs. These let a company ease network bottlenecks and save money by not having to upgrade workstation adapter cards or installed network cabling.

Al Herrington, the communications manager at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and a beta user of the ONcore Switching System from Chipcom (Southborough, MA), says the switching hub integrates easily into his network, "and the learning curve is almost zero." Because virtually all major hub vendors offer upgrades to ATM via modules that you plug into a hub, today's Ethernet switching hubs offer a stepping-stone to ATM.

In the past nine months, many leading router and hub vendors that lacked switching technology have acquired companies that have it. Cisco Sys-

tems (Menlo Park, CA) acquired switching-hub vendor Crescendo Communications, Network Systems (Minneapolis) acquired Bytex, 3Com (Santa Clara, CA) acquired Synneretics, and Chipcom merged with switching-hub vendor Artel Communications.

Cisco recently introduced its Catalyst switching hub, the first product from its relationship with Crescendo. Optical Data Systems (Dallas, TX) and Kalpana (Sunnyvale, CA) have partnered to integrate Kalpana's EtherSwitch technology with ODS's Infinity intelligent switching hub.

Traditional hub vendors such as Cabletron Systems (Rochester, NH) and Santa Clara-based Synoptics Communications are also releasing products. Cabletron scheduled a May release for its Multi Media Access Center-Plus, a fault-tolerant switching system that incorporates ATM and delivers aggregate bandwidth exceeding 10 Gbps, providing 500 ports of connectivity and 160 LAN segments. Cabletron's ESX-MIM MMAC module already supports the

company's switching technology called Secure Fast Packet Switching, which incorporates Ethernet and ATM switching technologies. Similarly, Synoptics' Lattis System 5000 intelligent hub will integrate the company's ATM, Ethernet switching, and ATM/Ethernet translation technologies into one platform over the second half of this year.

Ethernet switching offerings from other hub vendors include the LANswitch family from Lannet (Irvine, CA), which are cards for Lannet's Multinet hub; Kalpana's EtherSwitch EPS-1500; the Powerhub from Alantec (San Jose, CA); the Elite ES/1 from Standard Microsystems (Hauppauge, NY); and the Series 6000 with its PowerSwitch module from Network (Irving, TX).

Ethernet switching hubs are also coming from start-ups that have expertise in switching or high-speed networking, such as fast Ethernet pioneer Grand Junction (Fremont, CA), whose FastSwitch gives 25 switched 10-Mbps end-user connections and two 100-Mbps fast Ethernet server connections. Other

products are the EIFO Client/Server Switching Hub from FDDI (Fiber Distributed Data Interface) specialist Network Peripherals (San Jose), the SH 516 from NBase Switch Communications (Chatsworth, CA), and WaveSwitch from Plain-tree Systems (Wellesley, MA). The SH 516 and WaveSwitch connect multiple Ethernet segments to fast Ethernet networks.

Hub capabilities vary widely (see the chart). The EIFO product sells for about \$8000, while Cabletron's switching modules alone can cost \$8000 or more each, with hubs selling from \$12,000 to \$50,000. However, enterprise hubs usually support a higher number of LAN segments per switching module and workstations per segment than workgroup hubs do. Thus, enterprise hubs typically offer greater flexibility and management functions at costs of about \$300 to \$400 per port over a typical workgroup hub. One way to separate hubs is by the size of the network they will service and the functions they support.

—Salvatore Salamone

## What to Look For in Hubs

Type of Ethernet Switching Hub	Configuration	Properties to Look For	Possible Disadvantages	Examples of Switching Hubs
Workgroup	Server on FDDI or fast Ethernet backbone connected to multiple LAN segments.	Connections to high-speed LANs like FDDI and fast Ethernet. Low cost.	May not be expandable. May not provide for migration to other switching technologies. May not offer adequate network management tools.	EIFO Client/Server Switching Hub from Network Peripherals. FastSwitch from Grand Junction.
Departmental	Several dedicated applications servers on one or more FDDI or fast Ethernet backbones connected to high-powered workstations or Ethernet LAN segments.	Filtering. Ability to set broadcast fire walls. Fault-tolerant capabilities like hot-swappable components and redundant power supplies.	May not offer centralized management functions found in enterprise switching hubs.	DragonSwitch from Ungermann-Bass. LANplex 5000 from 3Com. Galactica from Artel.
Enterprise	Same as departmental, but with added ability to set up virtual workgroups. May be a mix of Ethernet switching and ATM.	Advanced network management capabilities. Security features. Migration path to ATM. May include routing functions.	Cost per port typically higher than that of workgroup hubs.	PowerHub from Alantec. LANplex 6000 from 3Com. MMAC from Cabletron. LANswitch from Lannet. Elite ES/1 from SMC.



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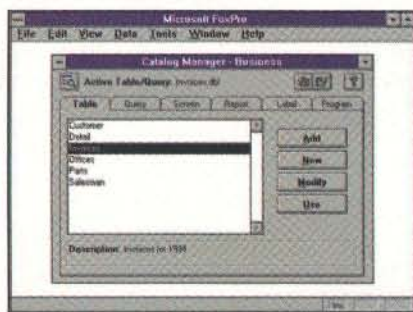
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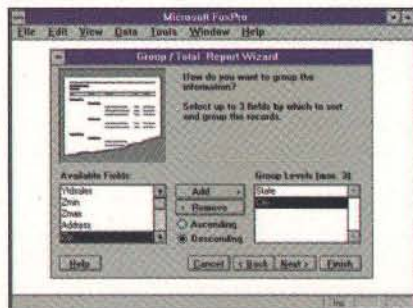
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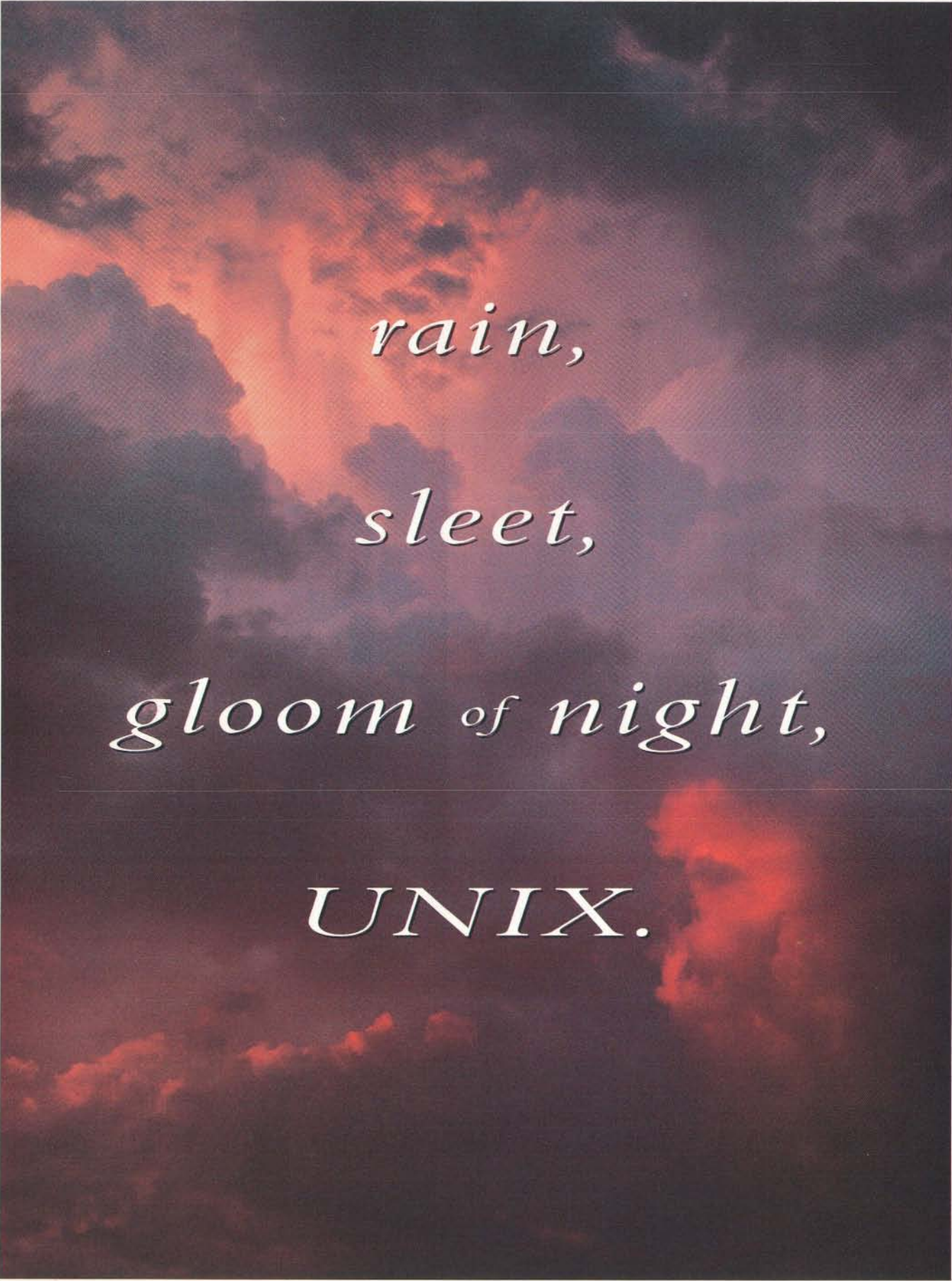
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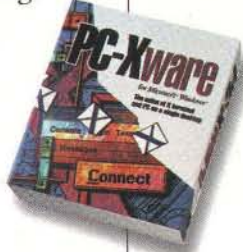
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## PCMCIA STANDARDS

# The Memory-Card Manager Grows Up

As committee members work on a new PCMCIA specification that will add bus mastering, a 32-bit data path, and 3.3-V operation, users continue to grapple with incompatibilities in current products. PCMCIA devices are getting closer to full interoperability across different PCs. But users of PCMCIA fax modems, LAN adapters, and other devices are finding that the reality of 100 percent compatibility approaches the goal only asymptotically—coming ever closer but never arriving.

Today's PCMCIA scene features a mixture of PCMCIA devices that may work perfectly well with one brand of PC but not with another. "Let's face it, the [PCMCIA] spec was originally designed as a memory-card manager," says Ray Briden-

baugh, marketing manager for American Megatrends (Norcross, GA), a company that develops system motherboards, BIOSes, and peripheral cards. "PCMCIA is not like PCI [Pe-

ripheral Component Interconnect]. The PCI spec needed little revision. But PCMCIA has now become a broad application bus, and this evolution of use has resulted in a challenge in maintaining compatibility across all applications."

Other incompatibilities can occur with devices that implement features not specified in the specification, such as the so-called Type IV, 16-mm cards. Toshiba's T4600 and T4700 notebooks have a 16-mm slot that accepts the company's dual-RJ-11-port modem. But the modem won't fit in standard Type I, II, and III slots.

Dan Sternglass, president of Databook (Ithaca, NY) and head of the PCMCIA committee's compatibility task force, offers a simple rule for solving compatibility problems: Call your PC vendor to

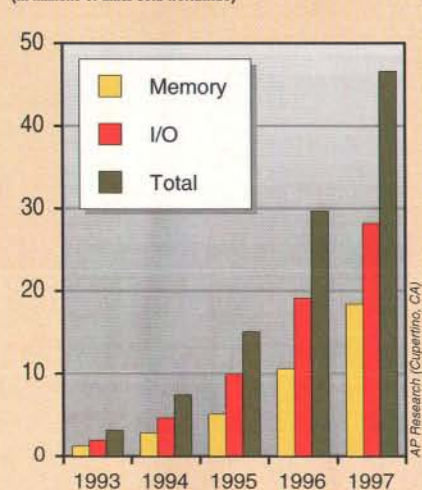
see if the PCMCIA device you want to buy will work with your PC, and use the latest drivers. "If people do that, they find that most everything out there works."

A more permanent solution revolves around the PCMCIA committee's efforts to tackle compatibility issues, which include developing a minimum required function set for the CIS (Card Information Structure). The host chip and card services use the CIS to properly set up IRQs (interrupt requests), I/O memory base, and other settings. Eventually, the committee hopes to make PCMCIA cards compatible across hardware platforms.

Compatibility will become more important as PCMCIA's popularity increases as a peripheral standard. "All of a sudden, this neat technology has a solid marketing purpose that will help drive it into legitimacy," says Bridenbaugh. "The stepchild has been adopted."

—Ed Perratore

**PCMCIA Card Sales Forecast**  
(In millions of units sold worldwide)



This chart shows worldwide sales projections for both memory and I/O devices over the next five years; 1993 figures are based on actual sales.

AP Research (Cupertino, CA)

## NETWORK BACKUP

## Vendors Work to Cure Incompatibility Blues

Incompatible backup storage formats are a big problem for many businesses. Although the physical formats that govern how data is laid down are identical in a given backup medium, a brand X drive might not be able to read a tape produced by a brand Y drive due to differing logical-medium formats that define things like file header information. Also, a vendor's products can be incompatible across different operating systems.

Backup software and hardware vendors hope that a new standard, SIFD (System-Independent Data Format), will make these compatibility problems obsolete. SIFD 1.0, based on Novell's SMS (Storage Management System) data format, is currently being presented for acceptance by the ISO.

Key backup and operating-system vendors like Exabyte, Palindrome, Novell, Mountain Network Solutions, and Cheyenne Software support SIFD. But Microsoft, which has its own Microsoft Tape Format standard, has not publicly endorsed SIFD.

SIFD supports DOS, Unix, NetWare, OS/2, and FTAM (File Transfer, Access, and Management) file systems, but it can be extended to support others. Although SIFD will most affect tape backup, it can be applied to both sequential (e.g., tape) and nonsequential (e.g., hard and CD-ROM drives) media.

SIFD-capable products are shipping now, but they won't solve storage-compatibility problems overnight: Media must be recorded in SIFD to achieve cross-plat-

form compatibility. Rerecording old tapes is costly and time-consuming, but it's worthwhile for some companies, according to Jeff Platón, chairman of the SIFD Association. He says the less attractive alternative is to keep your older equipment—drives, backup software, and perhaps the operating system—on hand to read non-SIFD archived data.

"SIFD is probably the wave of the future," says James McNeil, executive vice president of business development at Cheyenne Software. But he adds that Cheyenne will also support its proprietary tape format, because the company cannot assume that its current customers will immediately convert to SIFD.

—Michael Nadeau



## POINTING DEVICES

# Apple, Cirque Unveil Trackball Alternative



Cirque's GlidePoint brings the oldest pointing device—your finger—to PCs and notebooks. Instead of rolling a trackball or mouse, you drag your finger across the GlidePoint's motion-sensitive surface. Apple is using a similar technology in its new Mac PowerBooks.

Apple's new Mac PowerBook 500 notebooks will introduce an innovative pointing device that essentially has one moving part: your finger. Instead of rolling a ball as you would with a mouse or trackball, with Apple's new trackpad pointing device, you move your finger across a pad. The trackpad doesn't have any moving parts and doesn't require you to disassemble it to clean it. Instead of pointing and clicking, you point and tap with the trackpad.

Two layers of measurement electrodes built into the pad's surface are arranged in a checkerboard pattern that creates a series of intersections. The presence of your finger lowers the capacitance at the closest electrode intersections and modifies the signal received by the sense electrodes. The trackpad compares the current location of low capacitance, then compares it to the previous location, and moves the cursor accordingly. The trackpad's resolution (250 points per inch) allows cursor control down to the pixel level.

The new pointing device is not limited to PowerBooks. Cirque (Salt Lake City, UT,

(801) 467-1100) says it will sell a similar device called the GlidePoint that plugs into a PS/2 port for \$99. Cirque is also pursuing other manufacturers.

BYTE editors tested a preliminary version of the GlidePoint and found it should be especially useful in areas that restrict you to a limited range of motion, such as on an airplane. One potential drawback: The trackpad is so smooth that you don't get much tactile feedback. Any passive-matrix notebook, including the new PowerBooks, tends to lose the cursor when you move it quickly across the screen. With the passive-matrix/trackpad combination, you may find yourself looking up at the screen a lot more at first.

—Dave Andrews

## OS/2 on the PowerPC Slated for This Year

As Microsoft continues development on Windows Chicago and Daytona (a new version of Windows NT with a smaller RAM requirement), and Apple works to add multithreading to System 7.5, IBM is working on new versions of its operating systems as well.

By the end of the year, IBM plans to release its first Microkernel-based Workplace OS product for the PowerPC, which is in essence OS/2 running on the PowerPC. OS/2 for the PowerPC was slated to enter beta testing in June.

IBM says it is now in beta testing of a symmetric multiprocessing version of OS/2 that it hopes to release this summer. "Eight-MB systems would be comfortable running this," says Ayodele Anise, OS/2 SMP development manager.

IBM also has plans for a trimmed-down, faster version of OS/2 for Intel, but executives were mum on further details. A representative would say only that "IBM is starting to customize OS/2 for specific needs."

—D.A.

1994	1995	1996
OS/2 2.x	OS/2 1995	OS/2 1996
(OS/2 for Intel) "Lite" version SMP version Distributed SOM-objects II OpenDoc Security Systems Management Plug and Play	(OS/2 for Intel) Taligent layers	(OS/2 for Intel) Taligent R2 layers Full DCE
Workplace OS	Workplace OS	Workplace OS
(OS/2 for the PowerPC) OS/2 2.x on the IBM Microkernel Integrated Pen/Speech	(OS/2 for the PowerPC) Taligent layers Full DCE SMP	(OS/2 for the PowerPC) Taligent R2 layers

## PC TRENDS

# Entertainment, Education Help Drive Home PC Acceptance

### Consumer Electronics Adoption Trends



Years required for 50 percent penetration into U.S. homes (includes year of first sale to consumers)

\* Based on analyst's forecasts.

Sources: Technologic Partners, New York, NY, and others

Approximately 37 percent of U.S. homes have a computer, according to the Electronic Industries Association (Washington, DC). Analysts think that within four or five years, 50 percent of U.S. homes will have a PC.

Although computers dominate the business scene, they have not achieved the same success in the home. "At the home level, the computer is too difficult to learn how to use," says Joe Walsh, CEO of the Resource Finance Group (Grand Rapids, MI). RFG sells a 486-based multimedia system called the i-Media for about \$3500. It can play full-length CD-I (CD Interactive) movies on a big-screen TV thanks to an on-board MPEG decompression chip and S- and composite-video output.

Figures from the Software Publishers Association confirm

heightened interest in multimedia-capable machines from home buyers: PCs equipped with a CD-ROM drive accounted for 37 percent of home computers that were bought in 1993–1994, versus 19 percent in 1991.

The percentage of sound-card-equipped PCs bought for the home increased from 4 percent to 19 percent over the same period. "Productivity is a justification [for a home PC]," Walsh says. "But once people get the box inside their house, the thing that they're buying is entertainment."

—D.A.



## PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANTS

## Users: Give Us Connected PDAs with PCMCIA

**C**all it a strategic pause in the PDA (personal digital assistant) market. Although Apple has released a new MessagePad and Motorola says it will start selling a communications-centered personal communicator this summer, major players like Compaq are still evaluating what users want in a PDA.

BYTE surveyed about 30 current or former users of the Tandy/Casio Zoomer, Apple MessagePads 100 and 110, or Sharp Electronics' ExpertPad. Through the survey and follow-up interviews, BYTE came up with a 10-point wish list for next-generation PDAs.

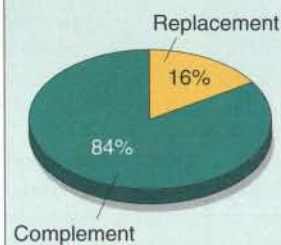
**No tiny PC clones.** More than half of those surveyed responded favorably to the notion of scaled-down versions of desktop applications. But in follow-

up interviews, several users bristled at the notion of a flat-out, scaled-down PC that would dilute the PDA's convenience and value. "No one is going to want to run WordPerfect [on a PDA]," says Greg Kearney, the owner of a MessagePad and a Zoomer and assistant systems administrator for the *Casper Star-Tribune* (Casper, WY).

**Connect it to the desktop.** Ken Wallich, user-interface group leader at Network Computing Devices (Mountain View, CA), switched from the Zoomer to the Apple MessagePad 110 because of the latter's ability to connect to his Mac.

**Focus the applications.** Ed Denhoff, facilities manager for a large financial organization, generally praises the Zoomer but questions the Tandy/Casio development team's encoding

### Users: PDAs Should Complement the Desktop



A recent survey conducted by BYTE indicates that users see PDAs as a complement, rather than as a replacement, for their desktop computers.

of documents (e.g., the U.S. Declaration of Independence) into ROM. Denhoff says that ROM space could serve better purposes, such as terminal emulation and fax capability.

Other respondents want applications with smart agents. Doug Miller, a principal of the management consulting and organizational development firm Reser Miller, says such an agent would read his appointment schedule, note an upcoming sales call, log on to an on-line service, download information about that company, and alert him 15 minutes before the call.

**Make them faster.** "When you're sitting at a table, at a meeting, or [talking] on a telephone, you have to be able to [access data] right now," says Bill Laird, assistant vice president of American Systems Engineering.

**Receive faxes, not just send them.** The MessagePad 110 permits the sending of faxes natively; the Zoomer, via America Online. But there are problems inherent in receiving faxes because of the PDA's memory restrictions (i.e., faxes can be only one to two pages long) and remote nature. Faxes may require routing through a desktop system or a third-party

store-and-forward service that knows how to reach you when you're on the road.

**Tell us where we are.** Several respondents said that they would purchase a GPS (global positioning system) on an add-on PCMCIA card today. They wouldn't have to pay a high premium for a car with similar GPS technology.

**Programming to go.** Users want programming modules to help the occasional, as opposed to professional, developer write custom applications and extend the PDA platform.

**Subscription services.** In the survey, users were tepid in their desire for subscription services. Zoomer users, for example, can already get headlines via America Online. But many on-line services (e.g., AT&T's PersonaLink and Apple's e\*World) won't be up and running until later this year. Kearney pictures a program that would download an electronic newspaper each morning into his PDA, so he could read it on the train and later transfer stock quotes to his desktop PC.

**Vertical applications for specific businesses.** Health care could be the greatest beneficiary of the PDA's advantages, according to Len Steinbach, who's vice president of technology for the National League of Nursing and president of the Microcomputer Managers Association. Unlike expensive terminals, PDAs are portable.

**Keep it slim.** This may be the biggest challenge as vendors add functionality to PDAs. PDAs must fit easily into a pocket. "I know from my days on Wall Street," says computer consultant David M. Blumenstein, "that the last thing I wanted to do was stuff things into my pocket that were going to kill the design of the suit."

—E.P.

### Users Say Pen Still Important

Pen-based PDAs have been maligned for their somewhat suspect handwriting recognition. But an informal survey conducted by BYTE shows that many users place a higher priority on PCMCIA, portability, and faxing than on accurate handwriting. The survey results suggest that users value pen-based input, but more for forms-based applications with ink capture than free-form handwriting recognition. (Results are in percentages.)

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Remote file transfer to/from office PC	55	30	15
Auto-synchronization with desktop PC files	41	48	11
Infrared link to desktop	22	56	22
Log on to office network	30	26	44
Send/receive E-mail, files	48	41	11
Send/receive faxes	67	26	7
Cellular voice services	33	30	37
Accurate handwriting recognition	63	26	11
Pen/stylus input	89	7	4
Ability to carry in pocket	85	15	0
Full-size keyboard add-on	7	45	48
Reduced keyboard for two-finger typing	8	33	59
PCMCIA devices	85	4	11
Scaled-down desktop applications	56	33	11
Household management applications	33	37	30
Business-specific (i.e., vertical) applications	19	48	33
Subscription services (e.g., news headlines)	26	33	41
Priced under \$500	48	45	7



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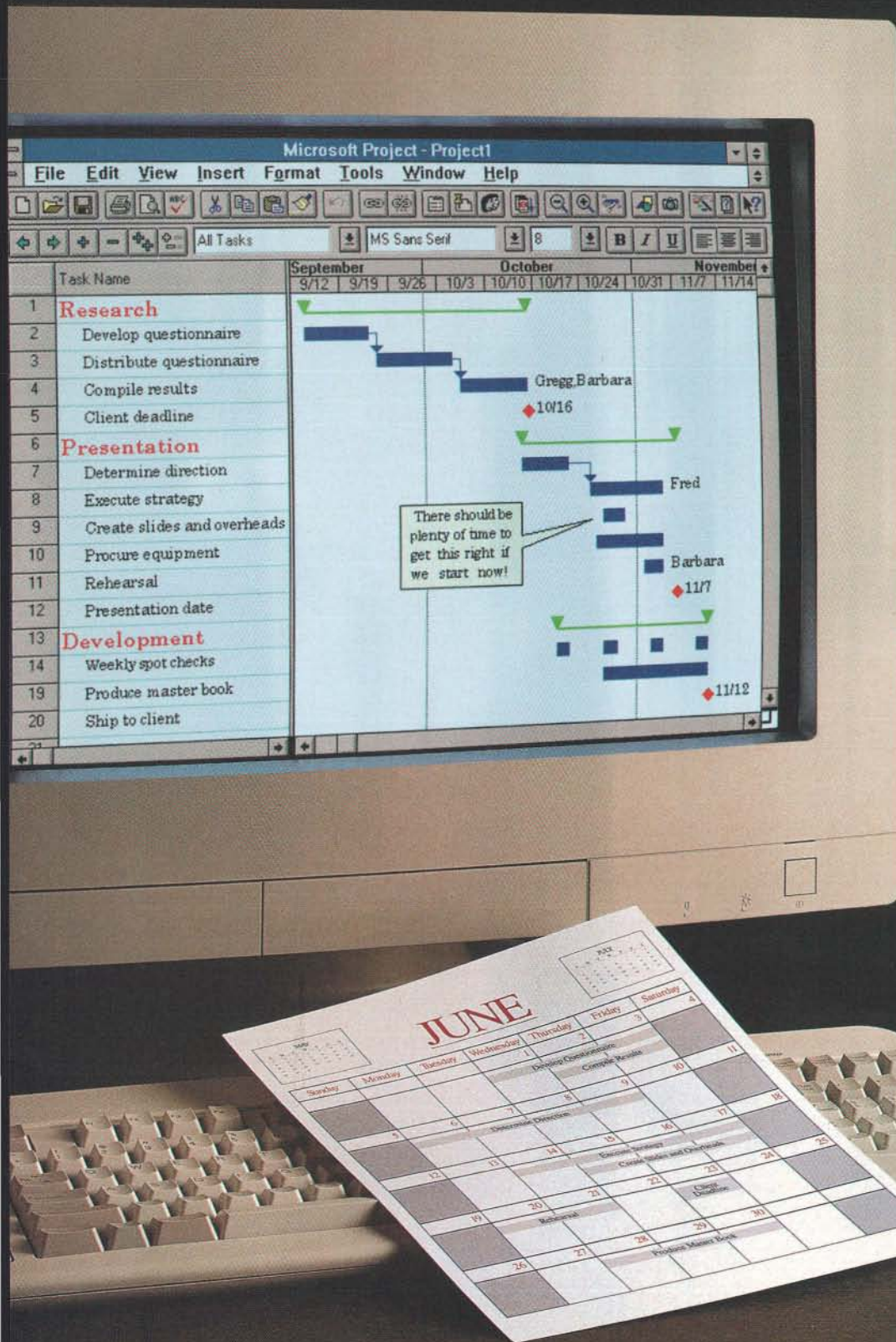
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## COURT ACTION

# Developers Debate Stac-Microsoft Trade-Secrets Decision

A seven-person jury decided that Microsoft's DoubleSpace disk-compression utility infringes two Stac Electronics data-compression patents and awarded Stac \$120 million. The jury also found that Stac had misappropriated and used in Stacker products Microsoft's trade-secret preloading feature and awarded Microsoft \$13.7 million.

Software developers and attorneys are debating the ramifications of the second deci-

sion. At issue is the preloading program that integrates data compression seamlessly into the internal operations of MS-DOS. Stac says it reverse-engineered the interface between DoubleSpace and MS-DOS and then developed a preload interface of its own for Stacker using a clean-room development process. Microsoft says Stac copied the design and functionality of more than 3000 lines of MS-DOS compression integration code.

"Stac was attempting to negate the competitive advantage enjoyed by Microsoft's own DoubleSpace developers through their collaboration with the Microsoft MS-DOS developers on this undocumented interface.... When confronted by Stac's patent-infringement lawsuit, Microsoft declared the undocumented interface to be a trade secret and sued Stac over its use. They didn't sue Stac for copyright violation because we didn't copy their code. What we did do was try to level the playing field just a little bit by making Stacker interface to MS-DOS in exactly the same way that DoubleSpace interfaced with MS-DOS."

—Gary Clow, president of Stac Electronics

"Stac disassembled and copied the design, functionality, features, and processes of more than 3000 lines of MS-DOS. This is the reason a federal jury awarded punitive damages against them for violating Microsoft trade secrets, not because they made a few undocumented calls to ensure compatibility. Developers should not be misled by Stac's misrepresentation of facts. Far from going after anyone, Microsoft is more committed than ever to work with the developer community."

—Paul Maritz, senior vice president, systems, Microsoft

"Microsoft is using the Stac case to extend trade-secret protection to algorithms. This is tantamount to banning reverse engineering entirely. Reverse engineering has been a valuable tool in the PC industry. We would not have the PC compatible in the first place if the IBM BIOS had not been reverse-engineered and cloned. Microsoft's attempt to put a stop to this is just another example of how they are trying to dominate this industry. And it's hypocritical...Microsoft's own engineers use reverse engineering, too."

—Tim Farley, author of the forthcoming book *Undocumented NetWare*



## CODE TALK

RICK GREHAN



### SNIP Away Object Memory Management Chores

In the software nativity wards of the world, new tools are being born daily. Too often, however, it seems the tool you need isn't yet available. This month's development tool is one I wish had been available about two years ago.

Back then, I was working on a rather large database program that required the creation and maintenance of numerous in-memory objects. The program also had many linked lists that wired objects together. The headaches of memory allocation and deallocation were severe enough, without the bookkeeping I had to do to make sure any destroyed object was properly removed from whatever lists it had been placed on.

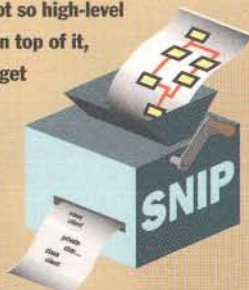
SNIP (Struct Network Implementation Program) for Windows (\$295) from Advantage Software Technologies (Cumberland, RI, (401) 334-4807) would have made my life so much easier I have to fight the urge to lie down and cry. SNIP automates the process of building and maintaining networks of dynamic, in-memory data objects (i.e., objects that can be connected either one-on-one or in arbitrarily complex lists, and that can be created and destroyed).

With SNIP, you build a DSM (data structure metafile), which is a file into which you load a definition of your data network, using a structured-language syntax reminiscent of C++ class definitions. The DSM language lets you describe objects as collections of attributes, some of which are descriptive (e.g., a client object consists of an id, which is an int, and the client's name, which is a pointer to a string) and the rest associative (e.g., a department object contains a reference to a list of employee objects).

SNIP then compiles this DSM file and produces C or C++ source code to handle the objects you've defined. It doesn't do everything, mind you, it just takes care of the memory management aspects. For example, if you've asked for C++ code, you'll likely have to edit it to load up the constructors so that data members are properly initialized. You'll also have to merge it into the rest of your application.

What it will build for you, though, are all the methods for creating objects, methods for destroying objects, iterators for walking through lists, methods for linking and unlinking objects to and from lists, and "safe" pointers to reference objects and their contents. (The pointers are "safe" in that they properly return NULL values if the object has been deleted.)

SNIP is positioned just right; it's not so high-level that you can't put application code on top of it, and not so low-level that you can't get underneath it and move its results across platforms. Think of SNIP as sort of a template on steroids. If your application needs lots of linked in-memory data objects, save yourself a lot of time and testing and check out SNIP.





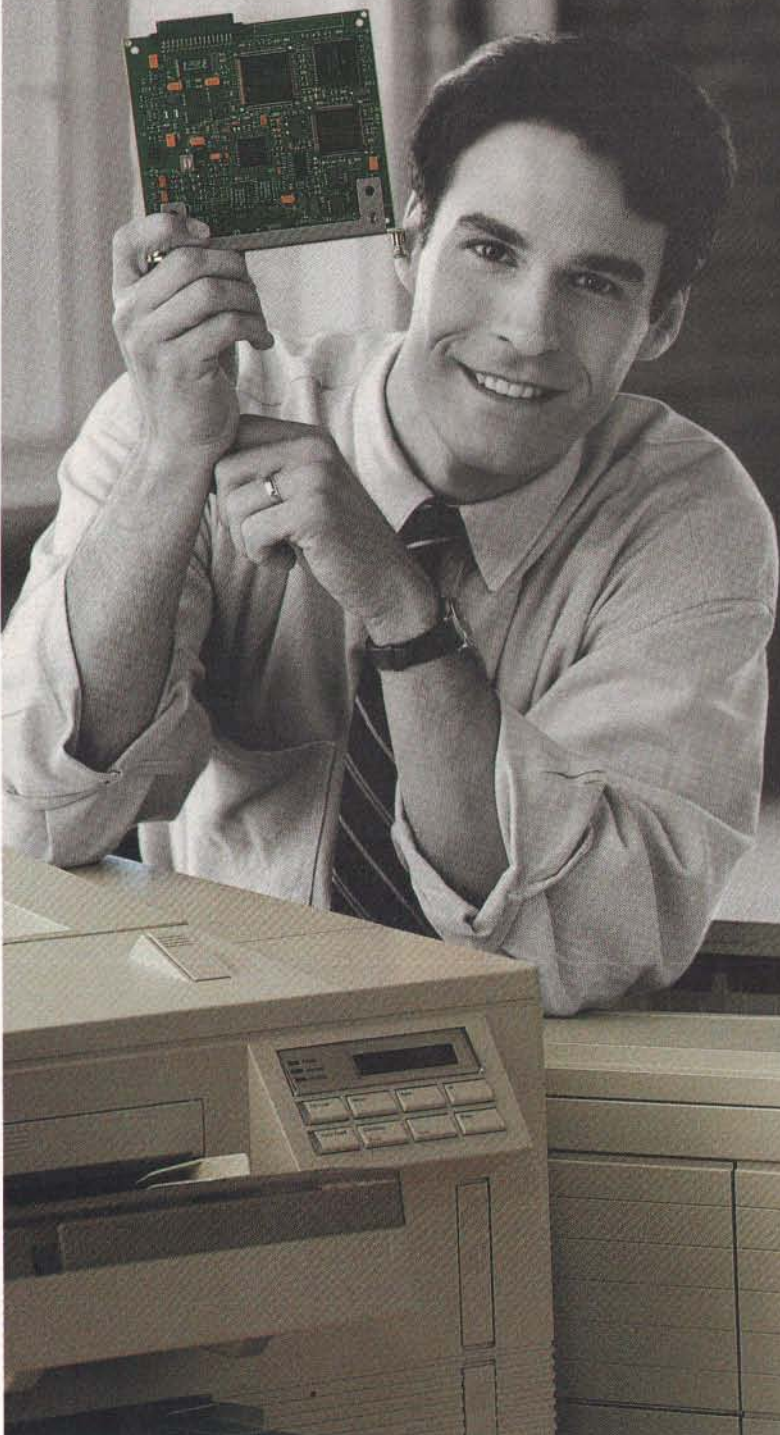
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## APPLICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

# Options for Notes Developers to Improve

**D**evelopers frustrated by a limited number of visual-programming tools for writing client programs that access data stored in Lotus Notes databases should see their options improve this summer, thanks to Lotus Development, Brainstorm Technologies, and even Microsoft. This summer, Lotus plans to release ViP, a Windows-based visual-programming environment to develop graphical front ends for Lotus Notes. ViP, which will sell for \$995 per developer, is based on a new version of LotusScript, a structured, BASIC-compatible programming language.

ViP joins a similar program from Brainstorm Technologies (Cambridge, MA, (617) 492-3399) called VB/Link for Lotus Notes (\$795). At press time, Microsoft said it was about to begin testing of software that gives applications like Excel bidirectional data-exchange capabilities with Notes.

ViP will help address the

concerns of developers who want an easier way to develop custom programs for Notes clients than by using the current applications development environment. ViP distinguishes itself in several areas, in part because it uses a new version of LotusScript that lets a developer construct object classes without having to rely on C++ programming to create custom object classes. Objects developed within LotusScript can be used interchangeably with externally defined objects.

ViP's most dramatic new feature is its linking tool. This tool, which appears in a standard Visual Basic-style toolbox, lets a developer draw a link between any pair of objects, such as a button and a chart tool. As a developer draws the link, ViP generates a default script that specifies how the two objects work together. When the default code does not establish the desired link, developers can sometimes make revisions just by click-

ing on dialog-box controls. In other cases, simple manual code edits are necessary. ViP should also improve Notes' interaction with SQL databases by allowing the concurrent display of data from multiple sources through Lotus DataLens and support for Microsoft's ODBC (Open Database Connectivity) platform.

Although Lotus says LotusScript is syntax-compatible with Microsoft's Visual Basic, LotusScript and ViP do not support Visual Basic custom controls. Nor does ViP currently let you write programs that view or update data stored in a rich text field in a Notes database. Maria Watts, Lotus's director of product management for applications development products, says a future version of ViP will support rich text fields.

Visual Basic and Visual Basic for Applications cannot currently access Notes databases on their own. But using Visual Basic and VB/Link for Lotus Notes, Visual Basic developers can visually program applications that access information stored in Notes databases. With VB/Link, a developer can compose a response document that can be attached to an existing Notes document, for example. In going the Visual Basic-VB/Link route, you can also take advantage of the many other custom controls available to Visual Basic developers. VB/Link has been shipping since December, and the company plans to release a new version this month that adds support for rich text fields and file attachments in Notes.

—Rick Dobson

## Whatever Happened to ...

**Intergraph's port of Windows NT to the Clipper RISC processor** (see "Windows, Windows Everywhere?," June 1993 BYTE)

Intergraph (Huntsville, AL, (205) 730-2000) has canceled that effort and is currently porting its wide range of CAD applications to Windows NT running on Intel-based processors. "Intergraph is now offering customers a move to the Windows NT Pentium environment," says Bill Payne, manager of systems product marketing at Intergraph. Payne added that earlier this year, engineers that had been helping Sun Microsystems port Windows NT to UltraSparc left Intergraph and now work at Sun. —D.A.

**The U.S. Government's plan to deliver encryption hardware with a trapdoor for police eavesdropping** (see "Encryption Chip Draws Fire," July 1993 BYTE)

The plan continues to meet broad and stiff resistance from public-interest groups and industry coalitions. The Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility (Palo Alto, CA) sponsored a petition that people could sign by sending in E-mail and received 48,000 signatures at the time this was written. Opponents say the Escrowed Encryption Standard suffers from being expensive, intrusive, and of uncertain value. The FBI and National Security Agency back the plan because they believe court-approved eavesdropping is necessary for investigating certain crimes. To obtain the petition, send a blank message via E-mail to petition-info@cpsr.org.

—Peter Wayner

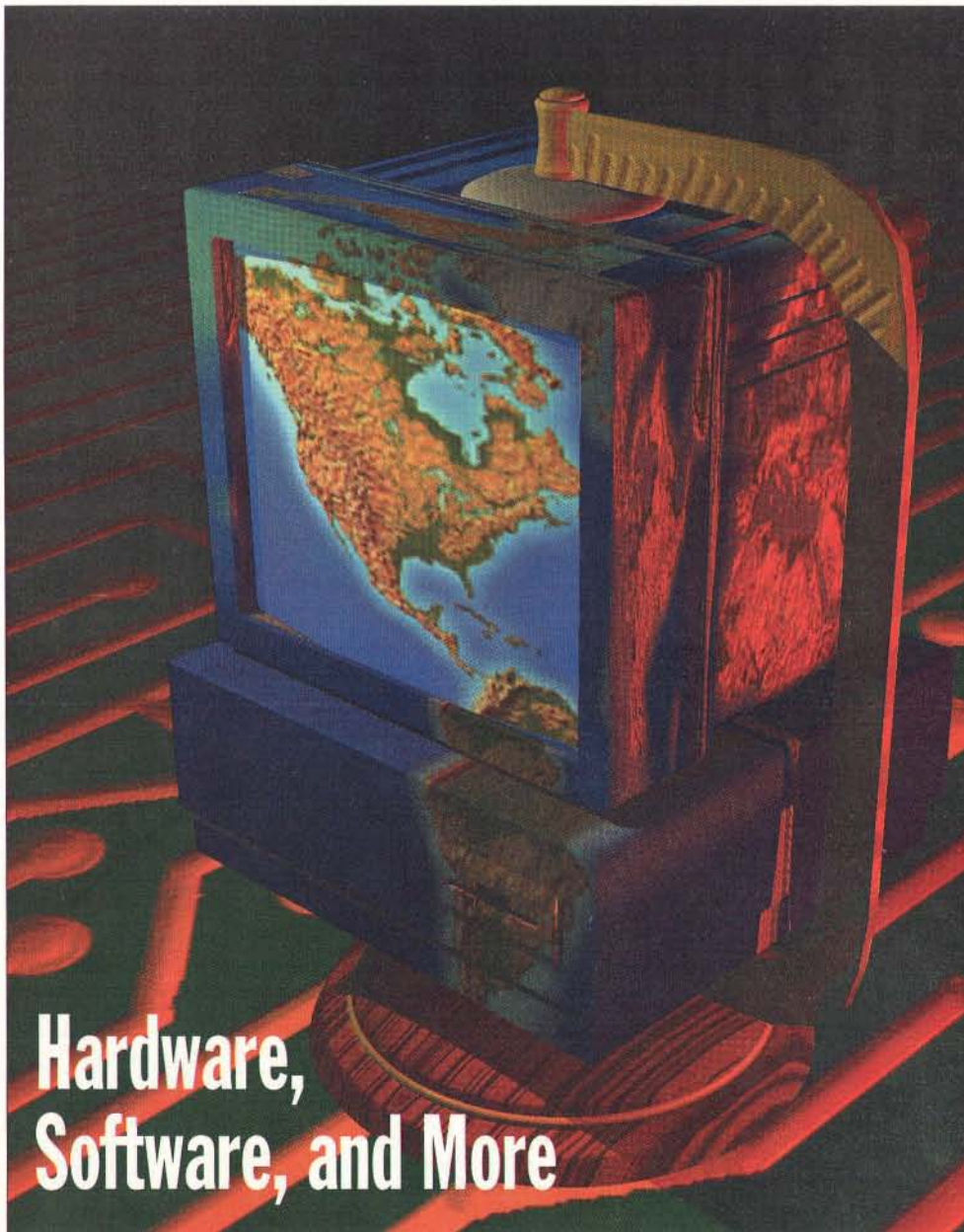
### LotusScript vs. Visual Basic

**Lotus says it will release LotusScript 2.0 this summer. The company will include it in Notes ViP and other applications. Microsoft's Visual Basic for Applications provides users of that company's Office products with a cross-application development language.**

Feature	Visual Basic for Applications	LotusScript 3.0
Introduction date	First quarter	February 1993
Products in now	Excel 5, Project 4, Access	Improv 2.1 for Windows
Projected introductions	Word for Windows in 1995	Notes ViP in summer; other products this year; cc:Mail, SmartSuite, and Notes 4.0 in 1995
Type of programming	Visual Basic technology	BASIC-compatible with object-oriented extensions
When it will support OLE Custom Controls	Now in Access 2.0, future Microsoft applications	Early 1995
Platforms	Windows, Mac	Windows, OS/2, some Unix



# BYTE What's New International



Hardware,  
Software, and More

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## High-End NextStep Workstations

page 40IS-3

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## 3-D Mouse

page 40IS-4

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## Intelligent Hub for AS/400

page 40IS-3

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## Paint and Compose on the Psion Series 3

page 40IS-20

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## Add Security to DOS and Windows

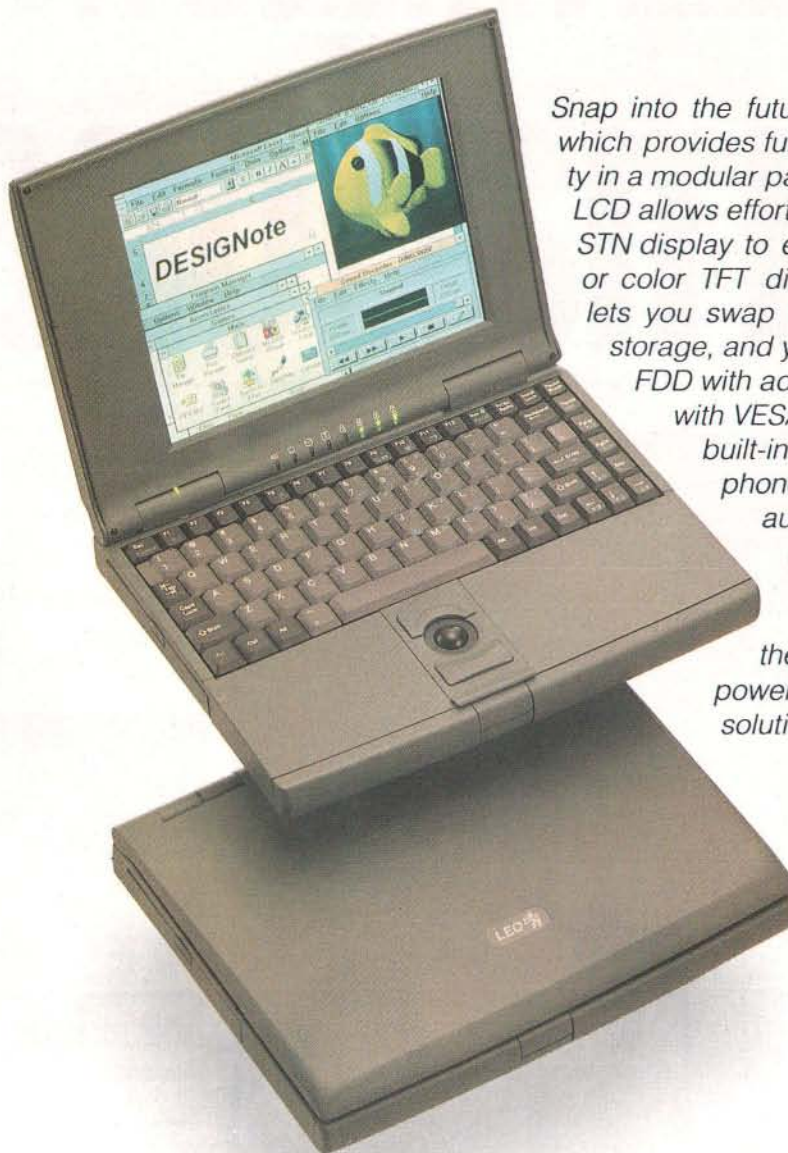
page 40IS-18

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Circle 527 on Inquiry Card.



# What's New International Hardware

## HIGH-END NEXTSTEP WORKSTATIONS



The latest workstations from Elonex come with NextStep 3.2. The NextStation machines are based on the company's PC-466/VL and PC-560/VL models and feature three versions of NextStep: the User Edition, the Developer Edition, and the Academic Edition. Models with the User Edition come with 16 MB of RAM and a 270-MB hard drive; Developer and Academic Edition models come with 32 MB of RAM and a 540-MB hard drive.

The PC-466B/VL NextStation (£2775 to £4575) features an Intel 66-MHz 486DX2 CPU with a 256-KB external cache, up to 64 MB of

RAM, a video adapter with an S3-928 accelerated graphics processor and 2 MB of VRAM, a 270-MB to 4-GB hard drive, and an Ethernet NIC. The standard model comes with a 17-inch 1280- by 1024-pixel monitor (20- and 21-inch models are options).

All PC-466/VL NextStation models provide a mixture of ISA and VL-Bus slots, a 3½-inch 1.44-MB floppy drive, two serial ports, one parallel port, up to five half-height drive bays, a 150-W PSU, a 102-key U.K. keyboard, and an IBM PS/2 Microsoft-compatible mouse. A SCSI CD-ROM drive and controller card are options.

The Elonex PC-560/VL NextStations (£3415 to £5555) feature an Intel 60-MHz Pentium CPU with a 512-KB external cache, up to 128 MB of RAM, a video adapter with an S3-928 accelerated graphics processor and 2 MB of VRAM, and an Ethernet NIC. The systems also have the same monitor choices as the PC-466B/VL.

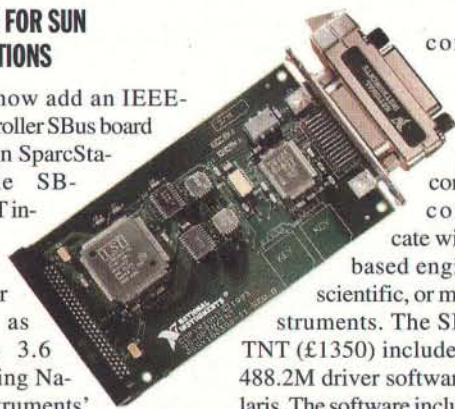
Desktop PC-560/VL NextStations offer up to five half-height drive bays with hard drives between 270 MB and 4 GB and a 150-W PSU. Floor-standing models have seven half-height drive bays with hard drives between 270 MB and 8 GB and a 220-W PSU.

Contact: Elonex plc., London, U.K., +44 81 452 4444; fax: +44 81 452 6422.

Circle 1421 on Inquiry Card.

## IEEE 488.2 FOR SUN SPARCSTATIONS

You can now add an IEEE-488.2 controller SBus board to your Sun SparcStation. The SB-GPIB/TNT increases the data transfer rates to as much as 3.6 MBps, using National Instruments' (Newbury, U.K.) TNT4882C ASIC and HS488 high-speed GPIB protocol. You can program the board with the company's NI-488.2M for Solaris software and the Sun versions of its LabView graphical-programming software and LabWindows/CVI automatic code-generating software. A SparcStation that's equipped with the SB-GPIB/TNT becomes a high-performance IEEE-488.2



controller that you can use to monitor, control, and communicate with GPIB-based engineering, scientific, or medical instruments. The SB-GPIB/TNT (£1350) includes the NI-488.2M driver software for Solaris. The software includes more than 50 GPIB-related routines and functions (e.g., Talker, Listener, Active Controller, and System Controller) that simplify programming the GPIB.

Phone: +44 635 523545;

fax: +44 635 523154.

Circle 1425 on Inquiry Card.

If you would like your new product considered for publication in the international section of BYTE, send press releases to BYTE, Attention: Martha Hicks, One Phoenix Mill Lane, Peterborough, NH 03458, U.S.A., (603) 924-2638, fax (603) 924-2550.

## AVOID HARDWARE CONFLICTS

With the Discovery Card, you can predetermine hardware inaccuracies when troubleshooting and avoid hardware conflicts when you install PCs, networks, add-in cards, or PC adapters. A compact add-in card that connects into any bus slot on the motherboard, the Discovery Card (£199.95) detects IRQ and DMA channel conflicts and usage of any IRQ or DMA channel, by any adapter, in any IBM PC, compatible, or EISA motherboard using ISA cards. The card traps IRQ or DMA requests the instant they occur anywhere within the system, according to Eurosoft (Bournemouth, U.K.). It captures the signal and tells you which signal was trapped

and where it came from. Whenever an IRQ or DMA request is made, the Discovery Card turns on the appropriate lamp. It keeps the lights lit until you reset the system or press the reset switch on the Discovery Card.

Phone: +44 202 297315;

fax: +44 202 558280.

Circle 1427 on Inquiry Card.

## INTELLIGENT HUB FOR AS/400

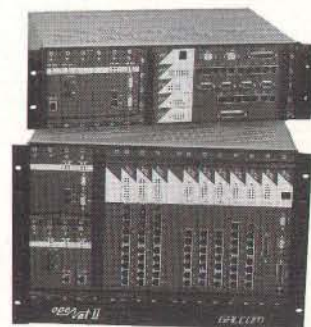
Galcom Networking (Tel Aviv, Israel) offers an intelligent hub for interconnecting LANs with AS/400 systems. OPENet II simultaneously supports the AS/400 5250 protocol (up to 600 addresses per hub), Token Ring (IEEE 802.5), and Ethernet (IEEE 802.3). The hub provides bridging within the LAN environment and gateways from the LAN into the 5250 environment.

OPENet II (call for price) is available as an 11- or 20-slot, 19-inch, modular rack-mountable chassis with multiple backplanes. All modules and functions are software-controlled, with automatic detection of network elements using either in-band or out-band modes. In the event of a power failure, the system automatically recovers to the last configuration. Each module in the hub has a nonvolatile memory that retains the previous configuration, enabling all modules to continue operation even after connections are lost.

Phone: +972 3 6958787;

fax: +972 3 6917323.

Circle 1426 on Inquiry Card.





# What's New International Hardware



## 3-D MOUSE

A unique hand-held pointing and tracking device, the Alps 3-D mouse lets you directly manipulate and control a display cursor in a 3-D workspace. The ergonomic design of the Alps 3-D mouse (call for price) provides six degrees of freedom (i.e., x, y, z, yaw, pitch, and roll), making it suitable for applications requiring precision and intuitive control (e.g., computer graphics, 3-D CAD, animation, 3-D games, and virtual reality). The mouse can emulate all the functions of a conventional 2-D mouse.

Contact: Alps Electric Ltd., County Cork, Ireland, +353 29 70677; fax: +353 29 70865.

Circle 1422 on Inquiry Card.

## ENERGY SAVER FOR MONITORS

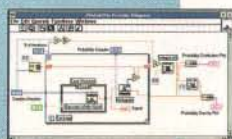
With the EcoMonitor, you can reduce radiation levels, heat, and glare from your monitor as well as save energy, according to Nighthawk Electronics (Saffron Walden, U.K.). The EcoMonitor will automatically switch off the monitor when the keyboard is inactive for a preset period of time (from 15 seconds to 40 minutes). As soon as you touch the keyboard, the monitor powers on again. You connect the compact unit, measuring 120 by 70 by 42.5 mm, to the keyboard and monitor cables. The EcoMonitor (£49) does not af-



fect the normal operation of the CPU, applications software, mouse, network, or printer. Phone: +44 799 540881; fax: +44 799 541713.

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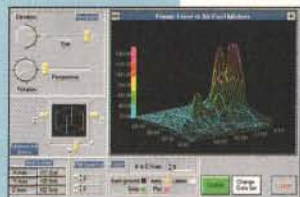
- image processing
- PID control
- speech processing
- surface rendering
- 3D plotting
- JTFA

### Beyond Analysis

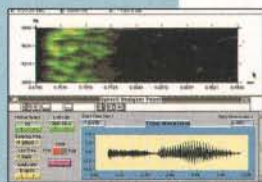
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Surface plot of a flame front using LabVIEW and the SurfaceView toolkit.



Data courtesy of NIH.

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# What's New International Hardware

## 3480-COMPATIBLE TAPE SUBSYSTEMS

Expanding its range of tape-storage products, Fujitsu Europe offers the M2483 and M2485. These are among the smallest form-factor subsystems providing a data transfer rate of 3 MBps (4 MBps in synchronous mode), a 2-MB buffer, and 18-track 3480/3490 compatibility for workstations and data interchange in midrange-system environments.

The M2483 and M2485 are available in desktop and rack-mount configurations for file-server and workstation environments (call for prices). Options include EDRC (compatible with IBM's IDRC data-compaction method) and automatic loaders supporting five or 10 cartridge magazines, for more than 2 GB of storage.



Contact: Fujitsu Europe Ltd., Uxbridge, U.K., +44 81 573 4444; fax: +44 81 573 2643.

Circle 1423 on Inquiry Card.

## VIDEO CAPTURE FOR THE MAC

Graphics Unlimited (Cambridge, U.K.) has added the Falcon to its range of desktop video cards for the Mac. The 7-inch NuBus card is designed to capture high-quality single images or movies from video sources and is suitable for Macs with NuBus slots.

The Falcon (£695) offers full-color or 8-bit gray-scale real-time full-frame capture in PAL and NTSC formats. A full range of software-switchable input formats lets the card capture images from sources such as VHS, professional Betacam recorders, camcorders, cameras, and laserdiscs. You can then use these images in Macintosh applications (e.g., desktop publishing, presentations,

and scientific analysis).

You can operate the Falcon as a QuickTime moviemaker. It provides frame rates of up to 30 fps in NTSC and 25 fps in PAL with software control for sound input devices, letting you make movies with synchronized sound. You can incorporate these movies into electronic publications, as part of a presentation, and even mix them with live video and print them to tape using the Graphics Unlimited video output card, Harlequin II (£1295; bundled with the Falcon, £1595). It includes a resizable preview window. Brightness, contrast, saturation, and (for NTSC) hue controls are provided for picture manipulation before capture.

Phone: +44 223 312808;

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*BOCAHUB-16 Plus  
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cabling with 10Base-2 and AUI  
connections 18 LEDs monitor link status  
and automatic partitioning*



# What's New International Hardware

## REMOTE ACCESS THROUGH ISDN

Arpeggio PC is a LAN connection device that gives remote PC



users access to a central LAN over the ISDN, at pay-as-you-use prices. Call charges are kept to a minimum because the link is active only when you need to send actual data, but it appears open all day to remote users and their counterparts on the LAN.

Sonix Communications (Cir-

cester, U.K.) has built in full voice connectivity to take advantage of basic-rate ISDN's dual channel. You can connect a regular analog telephone, answering machine, or fax machine to Arpeggio PC and make and receive voice calls while you send data over the ISDN.

Arpeggio PC (£1095) comes with its own installation program, and you can configure, reconfigure, and check the status of remote units from the central site. Similarly, the device's flash EPROM allows you to download software upgrades quickly and easily.

Phone: +44 285 641651;  
fax: +44 285 642098.

Circle 1431 on Inquiry Card.

## 486 ADVANCED NOTEBOOKS

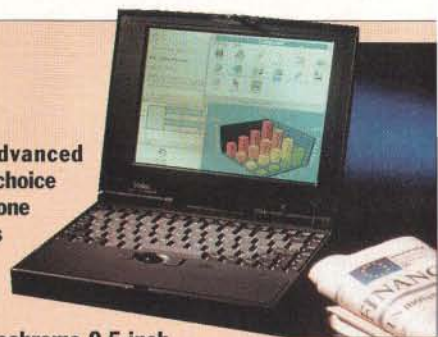
The Dossier 486 Advanced

notebooks feature a choice of screens, including one of the largest ones available—the color 10.3-inch Dual Scan STN. Other options include a monochrome 9.5-inch

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# What's New International Hardware

## PORTABLE DATA ACQUISITION

The battery-powered version of National Instruments' (Newbury, U.K.) SCXI signal-conditioning and data acquisition system, the SCXI-1000DC (£1350), comes with plug-in modules for portable or remote applications. You can use the built-in screw terminals to power the SCXI-1000DC from a 9- or 16-VDC battery or power supply. The unit can contain up to four SCXI modules to condition and acquire up to 128 signals.

National Instruments' SCXI-1382 (£672) is a 12-VDC battery pack/charger that attaches directly to the chassis. It can power the chassis for a minimum of 4.5 hours and includes a two-stage battery charger. The SCXI-1383 (£152) powers the chassis from a standard 240-VAC outlet or maintains its "standby" mode, in which the chassis is powered by 240 VAC but keeps the charged battery online for uninterrupted data acquisition in case of AC power failure.



Phone: +44 635 523545;  
fax: +44 635 523154.

Circle 1448 on Inquiry Card.

## GREEN MOTHERBOARD

Pine Technology's (Hong Kong) Model PT429G 486 VESA motherboard (call for prices) comes with the following: three master-mode VESA slots, a clock generator, 8- and 32-bit SIMM sockets, and 50-MHz capability. The motherboard includes DRQ2 and IRQ9 circuit protection; monitoring of the keyboard, COM1 and COM2, LPT1, floppy drives, and hard drives; and the company's auxiliary energy-saving connectors.

The design of the connectors

on the motherboard utilizes the AUX output feature of a green BIOS. Through this feature, the company has developed a full range of Cirrus Logic VGA cards to connect, by cable, directly to the motherboard AUX output. This allows the VGA card to add green features to a nongreen monitor. Another connector on the motherboard allows further connection to internal and external devices.

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## STEBUS BOARD FOR REAL-TIME APPLICATIONS

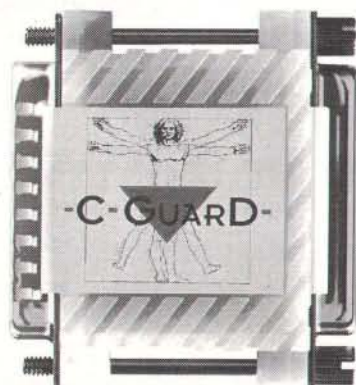
Compatible with PC-based development and debugging tools, the SCIM-386T is a 386SX single-board computer for embedded system applications. The board from Arcom Control Systems (Cambridge, U.K.) provides a hardware solution for many embedded tasks, but it also offers three expansion routes: an

STEBus, a SCIM mezzanine bus, and a signal-conditioning system.

The SCIM386T (£400 to £500 in medium volumes) is available with 16- or 25-MHz versions of the 386SX CPU. Eight surface-mount memory sites let you fit up to 4 MB of DRAM, which you can extend to 16 MB using the SCIM mezzanine-bus expansion facility. Further hardware includes a 32-pin EPROM socket for the stand-alone operating environment and application firmware, a keyboard interface, a real-time clock, a parallel port, and two serial ports.

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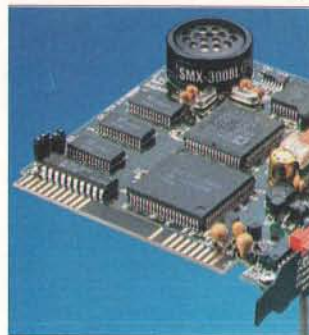
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# What's New

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bit color (3 by 8 bits), creating files of up to 46 MB each. The product is a single-slot card with 8-bit input and output LUTs for each channel and 4 bits for image overlay of text and graphics.

The S2200-J (£5900) is designed for use with the JVC 7300 camera. The camera uses a single CCD with an image-shifting technique, which creates a mosaic of 64 overlapping images and blends them into one ultrahigh-resolution image.

as new standards become available. The modem (call for price) from Pro-Nets Technology (Taipei, Taiwan) is designed to be upgraded by changing its software, new editions of which you can download from the hard disk of the host PC to increase the modem's speed and features. Available upgrades will include speed and voice.

Data features include V.32bis (14.4 Kbps), V.32 (9600 bps), MNP level 4 and V.42 error correction, V.42bis and MNP level 5 data compression, a built-in speaker, 16550 UART emulation, and FCC Class A/B, UL, and DOC approval. Fax features include Group 3 compatibility, V.17 (14.4 Kbps), V.29 (9600 bps), Class 1 command compatibility, and send and receive capability. Voice features include auto-detection of incoming data, fax, and voice calls; remote playback of messages; local record and playback message capability; and DTMF capabilities. Phone: +886 2 912 1235; fax: +886 2 912 6488.

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## COLOR SBUS IMAGE- CAPTURE CARD

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# What's New International Hardware

## NETWORK PRINTER

Designed as a central network printing resource, the Mannesmann Tally (Wokingham, U.K.) T9017 laser printer can produce 50,000 pages per month. It comes with a number of paper-handling options and networking alternatives. With printing speeds of 16 ppm (A4) and 17 ppm (letter) using a 25-MHz controller, the T9017 can easily handle complex tasks.

The T9017 (£2699) features dual input cassettes of 250 sheets each as standard and 350-sheet output capability. An optional multipurpose feeder (e.g., for envelopes) is also available, as are a mailbox sorter and duplex unit for double-sided printing and a 1500-



sheet feeder and stacker.

The printer features Hewlett-Packard LaserJet III Si and IBM

Proprinter XL24 emulations. Installing additional memory and a PDL module (PostScript-compatible) makes the unit a full-featured network printer. A coprocessor that's residing on this module boosts performance and provides Automatic Emulation Recognition, making operation on the network seamless. The T9017 comes with 13 scalable fonts and 14 resident bit-map fonts as standard.

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## HIGH-SPEED DATA COMPRESSION

The Series 5000 Access Optimizer is the most recent member of the Magnalink LAN/WAN optimizer product family. Available from M. L. Electro-Optics (Chadderton, U.K.), the access device incorporates high-performance data compression to give significantly increased throughput. The Access Optimizer combines capabilities such as high-speed data compression, two-channel statistical multiplexing, and an automatic redundant link.

The Access Optimizer (from £4490) compresses SDLC/HDLC synchronous data streams and is compatible with bridges, routers, gateways, channel extenders, and SNA communications controllers. The typical

compression ratio is between 2-to-1 and 4-to-1, resulting in an average sustained throughput of between 3 and 6 Mbps across Kilostream or Megastream links.

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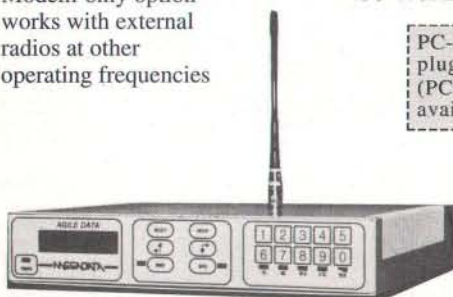
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## News & Views

The new range of TG-CAD libraries will be of interest to anyone writing programs which manipulate geometric objects. TG-CAD 2D 5.0 includes over 400 routines for creating 2D objects including NURB and Bezier curves, and computations such as intersections, polygon clippings, transformations, etc. TG-CAD 3D 5.0 is a superset of the 2D library with routines for generating solids & surfaces, 3D clipping, extrusion, perspective views and hidden line removal. TG-CAD Draw 2.0 is a complete set of 2D & 3D (floating point) drawing routines for DOS & Windows. It includes a DXF viewer and a ray tracing & shading program with multiple light sources, Phong highlights and which can output GIF or PCX files. TG-CAD DXF Translator 2.0 lets you read & write DXF files through ACAD release 12. You can also read ACAD symbol/font files. TG-CAD Professional 5.0 bundles all 4, includes both LIBs and DLLs and only costs £795 (£1080 with full C source code). Call us now for further details.

The new Phar Lap TNT DOS-Extender SDK 6.1 now includes a novel feature which lets you write a Visual Basic front end for your 32-bit TNT DOS app. This is done through the WinPipe API which lets Visual Basic launch a TNT app and exchange messages & data with it. This is made possible by a special VxD which lets Virtual Machines communicate with each other under Windows 3.1. Call us now for further details.

## PROGRAMMING TOOLS

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# What's New International Software

## WINDOWS PAINTING AND RETOUCHING

A painting and retouching package, Fauve Matisse offers image scanning, processing, editing, and creating facilities for Windows. The program provides simulated oil and watercolor brushes, traditional painting tools, and special effects (e.g., felt pens, pencils, and charcoal).

Available from CGS ComputerBild, Fauve Matisse uses objects that it can define simply by tracing part or all of an image. Once defined, objects have their own integrity, so you can move a foreground piece, alter a background, and integrate several images. Fauve Matisse (£99) lets you scan in an image through a TWAIN-compatible device and modify it using the available brushes. Predefined tools range from airbrushes and pencils to pointillist and cubist effects, each of which you can customize.

In addition to 34 filters, Fauve Matisse offers Photo CD support with an integrated folder interface; automatic detection of WinTab capability, which allows Kurta-tablet support; a quill brush with various sizes and pressures; a Japanese watercolor brush; a chameleon brush that changes color with pressure; a Make Marquee command that lets you use Bézier shapes to crop objects; opacity export, import, invert, and fill commands; and object position remember and restore commands. You can tab between selected objects and move objects with your cursor keys.

Contact: CGS ComputerBild, London, U.K., +44 81 679 7307; fax: +44 81 764 7898.

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the same process or run a macro in a spreadsheet. Thus, you can analyze data as it's being collected and automatically generate a report, all with single button-presses.

The Windows program from Windmill Software (Manchester, U.K.) has display options that include a range of analog meters, moving bars, precise numerical readings, and changing icons. They all show color-coded alarms, with two levels individually set for each channel.

Phone: +44 61 833 2782;

fax: +44 61 833 2190.

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## MAC FILE MANAGEMENT

Computers Unlimited (London, U.K.) says that Dayna Communications' ProFiles breaks new ground in the viewing and manipulation of files and folders on the Mac. The file management application lets you find, organize, and group folders, documents, and applications in one window, whether they are stored on high-capacity hard drives, removable media devices, portable computers, or network volumes.

With the file management options, you can synchronize folders and volumes; move, copy, and search in the background; and compress or expand faster and easier. The find capabilities let you search by multiple criteria, including content, creator, type, and backup date. You can perform all find functions in the background, as well as save and reuse search criteria. ProFiles' (£99.95) features are fully functional over AppleShare or Personal File Sharing, and across NetWare and Unix servers (either on a LAN or through ARA).

Phone: +44 81 200

8282; fax: +44 81

200 3788.

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## APPLICATIONS DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

The DDB-CASE suite of applications development tools (single license, from £5500) works in client/server mode on networks to provide workgroup and multiproject support throughout the development life cycle. The tools use IBSI's (Uxbridge, U.K.) Accelerated Portable Software Engineering technology, so your applications remain independent of hardware platforms, operating systems, databases, communications systems, user interfaces, and proprietary languages. The APSE technology allows you to change an entire implementation, or components of it, at any time.

DDB-Conceptor includes modeling tools, on-line guidance, automated quality assurance, and documentation facilities. DDB-



Delta takes the systems designs you developed in DDB-Conceptor and uses them to generate the code you need to implement applications, automatically adding environment descriptions to optimize the generated code for the chosen platforms. DDB-Object supports an object-oriented approach to systems building, and DDB-Reverse automates the reengineering of existing code into the DDB-CASE repository. Phone: +44 895 814815; fax: +44 895 814825.

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## SUPERVISORY AND CONTROL SOFTWARE

In Windmill Graphics 2 (£295), you get more powerful control options and more ways to display real-time data. New analog and digital output buttons provide straightforward control of output channels. DDE control lets you start data logging with the touch of a button and swap seamlessly between windows to show different levels of detail of





# What's New International Software



## EXTENSIONS FOR QUARKXPRESS

Duo Conseil (Puteaux Cedex, France) offers three extensions for QuarkXPress 3.2: Alias 2.1, Info 2.1, and Stylist 1.6. With Alias 2.1 (1290 French francs), you can create, save, and use search-and-replace tables to find printable Mac characters, special QuarkXPress characters, and special characters used by PCs. You can search for a string of characters, find each occurrence in a document, and replace it with another string.

Info 2.1 (990 French francs) obtains information about text or an image in a box or about a complete QuarkXPress document. The program provides two functions. Box Info provides the characteristics of text that's located in a single text box or a chain of text boxes and the specifications of an image located in an image box. Document Info provides a detailed report of the document's parameters.

Stylist 1.6 (590 French francs)

lets you apply style sheets to select characters in a QuarkXPress document. In Paragraph mode, the program applies the selected style sheet to the entire paragraph. In Character mode, Stylist 1.6 applies the attributes of the selected style sheet to the highlighted text, so that you can use existing style sheets to change the appearance of some text on an individual-character basis.

Phone: +33 1 47745488;

fax: +33 1 47788342.

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## SIMPLIFY FRAME-RELAY NETWORKS

Comdisco Systems (Almondsbury, U.K.) has added a Frame Relay Cloud module to its Bones product family of network performance-analysis tools to help you plan and design a high-speed



## ADD SECURITY TO DOS AND WINDOWS

Secu (348 deutsche marks) lets you protect your DOS- and Windows-based directories, programs, and data files from unauthorized users. In addition to security, the program provides virus protection by controlling access to programs, data files, and system areas. For each user, Secu stores AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files on the hard drive. It controls the system, preventing it from reading from and writing to the floppy drive or other devices. You can assign 20 users and passwords to each PC and import and export user and access rights for central administration. A boot security option lets you lock the PC's hard drive against reading from a boot disk.

Contact: Giant Software GmbH, Rosbach, Germany, +49 6003 1381; fax: +49 6003 7725.

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communications system. You specify the frame-relay access rate, CIR, committed burst size, and transit delays. The Frame Relay Cloud module (call for price) includes built-in graphs of

transmission, transit, and total frame delays; network offered load; and network utilization. Phone: +44 454 614256; fax: +44 454 618880.

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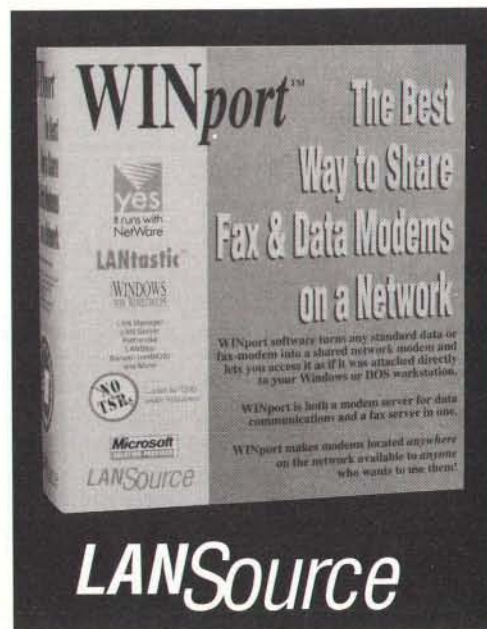
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TNT DOS-Extender is the new standard in 32-bit DOS. The DOS power you've been waiting for is finally here!

### Try it out... FREE!

If you have the Microsoft Visual C++ 32-Bit Edition tools, you've already got a free trial-size version of TNT DOS-Extender. TNT DOS-Extender



Lite is automatically installed with your Visual C++ 32-Bit Edition software. You can use TNT DOS-Extender Lite to build versatile 32-bit programs that can access up to two megabytes of memory and run under DOS, Windows 3.1, or Windows NT. It's the easiest introduction you'll find to the power of TNT.

### The next-generation DOS extender.

TNT DOS-Extender is the only DOS extender to support the Win32 API, allowing your native Windows NT character-based programs to run under DOS with no changes. Programs can access all available memory — up to four gigabytes — and run with 32-bit speed and power.

But that's not all. TNT DOS-Extender also supports powerful NT features such as dynamic link libraries (DLLs) and threads, enabling developers to build modular, responsive multi-megabyte applications. And all this power is delivered with the high standards of technical excellence you've come to expect from Phar Lap, the industry leader in DOS extender technology.

### Already a standard.

TNT DOS-Extender is the tool chosen by Microsoft to develop their own 32-bit tools. TNT DOS-Extender was used to build both the 16-bit and 32-bit versions of Microsoft Visual C++, Microsoft MASM 6.1 and Microsoft FORTRAN PowerStation.

### 32-bit CodeView, too!

TNT DOS-Extender includes a 32-bit version of the familiar Microsoft CodeView debugger. So you can use industry standard Microsoft tools, including CodeView, to develop software for the operating system of the future — that your DOS customers can use today!

TNT DOS-Extender SDK is the latest release of Phar Lap's award-winning 386DOS-Extender SDK. You can also use TNT DOS-Extender with a wide variety of 32-bit compilers (including Visual C++ 32-Bit Edition) to build Extended-DOS programs with no NT system required. In addition, TNT DOS-Extender is compatible with all 32-bit tools supported by 386DOS-Extender. An add-on run-time kit is available for developers who want to distribute TNT DOS-Extender applications to customers.

So if you've been wondering what the future holds for DOS developers, don't wait... bring cutting-edge technology to your DOS applications today with TNT DOS-Extender!

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# What's New International Software

## PAINT AND COMPOSE ON THE PSION SERIES 3

Widget Software (Knebworth, U.K.) has updated its Paint and Compose software to take full advantage of the larger screen and better resolution of the Psion



Series 3a. The product (£69.95) automatically detects whether it is to use the nine-row screen of the Series 3 or the 17-row, double-resolution screen of the Series 3a. Also included are drivers for the following printers: Canon BJ,

Hewlett-Packard LaserJet, IBM Proprinter, and PostScript.

In addition to letting you draw boxes, lines, and ellipses, Paint lets you download and display graphics files in PCX, GIF, and BMP formats. The program can also capture and print graphs from the Series 3/3a spreadsheet.

Compose creates and saves melodies on bass or treble clef. It plays compositions using the analog sound system on the Series 3/3a. The analog sound system requires much less storage space than the digital sound system, so you can record longer pieces of music. In addition, Compose includes several pieces of music and lets you replace the Series

3/3a's alarms with extracts of music.

Phone: +44 438 815444;

fax: +44 438 815222.

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## VISUAL PROGRAMMING UNDER AUTOCAD

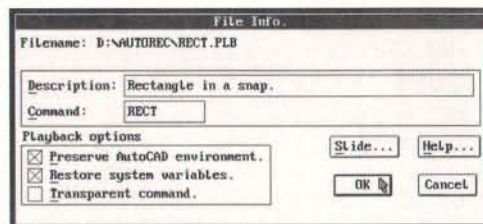
According to ComSoft (Amman, Jordan), AutoRecorder 1.0 is the ultimate tool for eliminating repetitive tasks in AutoCAD. The program is an ADS application that replaces Autolisp in creating AutoCAD utilities without exiting AutoCAD. AutoRecorder 1.0 (US\$95) allows user-entry values (e.g., Point, Real, Integer, Angle, Entity,

Selection Set, and Keywords). It provides a dialog-box programming environment, on-line slide association with commands, debugging inside the AutoCAD drawing editor, and on-line modification of a program while debugging. You can modify, delete, undelete, pack, and insert recording steps, as well as validate and check user entries against ranges, without adding code.

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##### Labtam USA

120 Hudson Street, Northboro, MA 01532 USA  
Tel: 508-393-5780 Fax: 508-393-1456

## What's New

### UNINSTALLER 2 FOR WINDOWS

Available from Contemporary Software (Lewes, U.K.), Micro-Help's UnInstaller 2 (£49) removes unwanted Windows applications plus all associated DLL, EXE, and INI files. The latest version helps you find and remove orphan and duplicate files and provides a system cleanup option that removes fonts, video drivers, and unneeded Windows components. Other features include an MDI interface with an optional status

bar, a button bar, and 3-D effects; an undo option that restores uninstalled applications; support for Norton Desktop for Windows and other popular shells; a file viewer that displays popular file formats; an INI editor to assist with INI file maintenance; and enhanced support for tracking entries in WIN.INI, SYSTEM.INI, AUTOEXEC.BAT, and CONFIG.SYS files.

Phone: +44 273 483979;

fax: +44 273 486224.

**Circle 1470 on Inquiry Card.**

## CONTROL SYSTEM DESIGN

A major upgrade of Golden & Verwer Partners' control system design and simulation package, Coda-III (£295) includes automated pole-placement design; cost function evaluation and optimization; and time-domain, frequency-domain, and s-plane environments for studying linear continuous

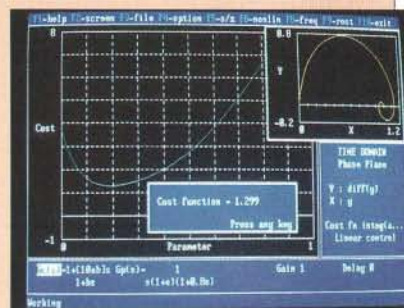
time systems. You can define nonlinearities interactively, simulate the effects of the nonlinearity on the system time response, and plot its describing function in the frequency domain.

Victor-II (£250) transforms your PC into a real-time controller that can operate as a standard three-tier controller or implement general direct digital control. You can use the package in emulation mode to simulate typical process plant behavior or in external mode, where it controls an external process via an analog interface. Victor-II provides a real-time DOS application and a built-in trend recorder with a real-time scrolling display. You can examine, save, recall, and print current and historical data.

With Harm for Windows (£49), you can teach the principles of Fourier theory. The program has you enter the formulas for the harmonic components, and it adds them up to produce the composite wave form. You can use most functions of harmonic numbers and work in polar or Cartesian coordinates. Harm lets you add harmonic elements individually to form a table or to generate en bloc by defining functions in terms of the harmonic number. You can easily edit, delete, or review the harmonics through a harmonic table editor, which is available in a separate window.

Contact: Golden & Verwer Partners, Cheadle Hulme, U.K.,  
+44 61 485 5435; fax: +44 61 488 4448.

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Kowloon, Hong Kong.  
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# The One for Windows!

Why buy several packages, from different manufacturers, when all you want to do is write a complete application? One that includes powerful rules, object hierarchies, database support, graphics, and a sophisticated user interface? That is, why buy several packages, when just one will do?

LPA-ADK is The One! A complete Applications Development Kit, it lets you write entire, complex applications with the greatest of ease. Full 32-bit addressing means that you will never be short of space, and because memory handling is automatic, you don't need to worry about managing the resources you are using: it's all done for you. LPA-ADK includes:

- High-level rules and objects for defining the application
- Graphics, including vectors, fonts, bitmaps and metafiles
- MDI, dialog, text, user, message, status and control windows
- Full DDE support, and powerful C and DLL interfaces
- Database access, including SQL, ODBC and others

along with the programming language, function libraries and debuggers that you would expect from LPA, the leading desktop Prolog house!

Compatible versions are also available for DOS and the Macintosh ...

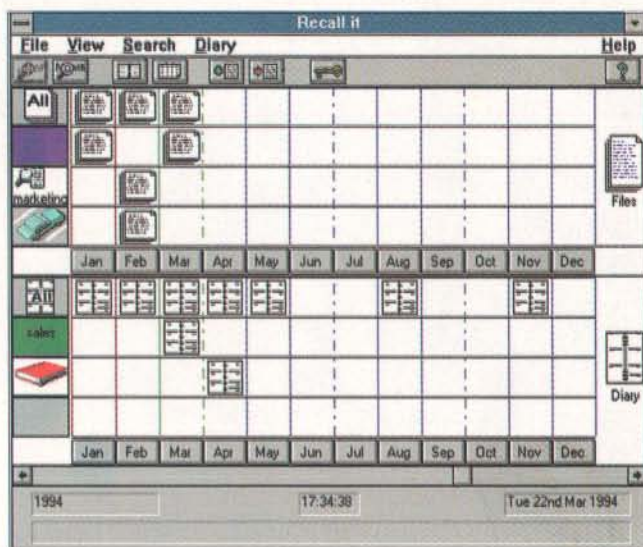
... LPA-ADK is The One!

Why not phone, fax or email LPA today to find out more!



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Email: lpa@cix.compulink.co.uk - Compuserve: 100135,134

# What's New



## FIND YOUR FILES

An information-rich file finder and diary system, Recall it helps you find files by linking context information such as colors, keywords, and pictures to files when you create or change them. Intuitive Technology (Groby, U.K.) has also incorporated a diary that lets you link information attributes with events and meetings, which can help you recall files that you have associated with a particular diary entry. You can search for files with specific information attributes. Recall it (£99) shows matching files, and if you simply double-click, the program can launch an application from which you can quickly and easily open a matching file. Phone: +44 533 870312.

Circle 1478 on Inquiry Card.

tions, merge graphs, and calculate intercepts to solve simultaneous equations.

An astronomy package, NightSky (£79.95) can quickly and accurately draw star maps for any place on earth and any date and time. The program provides the sun, moon, and planets; the Milky Way; and deep-sky objects, such as clusters and galaxies. You can associate text with each star, join constellation boundaries, update the map in real or accelerated time, observe lunar and solar eclipses, and predict and watch occultations. Phone: +44 606 48511; fax: +44 606 48512.

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## ARABIC XT AND QUARKXPRESS

Layout (Ashrafieh, Lebanon) has a bundled package (US\$1595) that consists of an international English version of QuarkXPress 3.3 and the Arabic XT 2.0 professional edition. The Arabic desktop publishing package will also support additional extensions developed for QuarkXPress. Arabic XT 2.0 supports multiple columns, paragraph indentations, and tabs, as well as all the features of QuarkXPress 3.3. Phone: +961 1 200539; fax: +961 1 200538.

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## TWO ACORN PACKAGES

Clares Micro Supplies (Northwich, U.K.) offers two packages for the Acorn range of RISC OS computers: Plot and NightSky. A data manipulation and presentation package, Plot (£79.95) provides a range of coordinate systems from 2-D Cartesian, parametric, and polar systems to 3-D Cartesian, cylindrical, and spherical coordinates. The program lets you carry out calculus operations, apply transforma-

# Real-Time Multitasking

for Microsoft C, Borland C, Borland Pascal

## Develop Real-Time Multitasking Applications with RTKernel!

RTKernel is a professional, high-performance real-time multitasking kernel. It runs under MS-DOS or in ROM and supports Microsoft C, Borland C++, Borland/Turbo Pascal, and Sony Brook Pascal\*. RTKernel is a library you can link to your application. It lets you run several functions/procedures as parallel tasks and offers the following advanced features:

- pre-emptive, event/interrupt-driven scheduling
- number of tasks only limited by RAM
- task-switch time of 6  $\mu$ s (33-MHz 486)
- up to 64 priorities (changeable at run-time)
- time-slicing can be activated
- time interrupt rate of 0.1 to 55 ms
- high-resolution interval timer (1  $\mu$ s)
- activate or suspend tasks out of interrupt handlers
- programmable interrupt priorities
- inter-task communications using semaphores, mailboxes, and message-passing
- keyboard, hard disk, floppy disk idle times usable by other tasks
- supports math coprocessor and emulator
- supports up to 36 COM ports (DigiBoard and Hostess boards)
- protocols XOn/XOff, DTR/DSR, RTS/CTS
- full support of NS16550 UART chip
- fast, inter-network communication using Novell's IPX services
- runs under DOS, LANs, or without OS
- call DOS without re-entrance problems
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- supports CodeView and Turbo Debugger
- Kernel Tracer for easy debugging
- ROMable
- full source code available
- no run-time royalties
- free technical support by phone or fax

RTKernel-C 4.0 ..... DM 795

RTKernel-Pascal 4.0 ..... DM 695

C Source Code: add DM 695

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its new stars ...**





# The IBM ValuePoint P-series

Performance, potential and the sheer practicality of PCI or VESA 32-bit technology

**Space savers**  
To fit your desk and your budget

## SX33



- 4MB RAM
- 170MB HD
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VESA LB
- Flash BIOS
- 3 ISA slots
- 3 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN

## DX33



- 8MB RAM
- 170MB HD
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VESA LB
- Flash BIOS
- 3 ISA slots
- 3 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2

## DX33



- 8MB RAM
- 270MB HD
- opt. L2 cache
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VESA/PCI LB
- Flash BIOS
- 5 ISA slots
- 5 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2

## DX2/66



- 8MB RAM
- 360MB HD
- 128KB L2 cache
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VESA/PCI LB
- Flash BIOS
- 5 ISA slots
- 5 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2

## DX4/100



- 16MB RAM
- 540MB HD
- 128KB L2 cache
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VESA/PCI LB
- Flash BIOS
- 5 ISA slots
- 5 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2

## DX2/66



- 16MB RAM
- 540MB HD
- 128KB L2 cache
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VESA/PCI LB
- Flash BIOS
- 8 ISA slots
- 6 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2
- Double spin CD-ROM drive

### Key features

See "IBM ValuePoint glance" for further features

- Intel processors: i486SX i486SX2-50/25, i486DX iDX4-100/50
- ZIF sockets on the motherboard upgrade
- Up to an awesome 128M motherboard
- Up to 4 hard disks: 728M
- Ultra-fast 64-bit graphics to over 50 million Windows
- First PC in the world to support VESA and PCI 32-bit
- Spare VESA or PCI 32-bit
- EnergyStar power management
- Plug and Play ready
- Easy-to-use diagnostic software
- Flash BIOS

\*with 2MB DRAM and iDX4-100

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# IBM ValuePoint II

"The best selling PC product line in Europe in 1993."

Source: Dataquest



## DX33

- 4MB RAM
- 120MB HD
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 3 ISA slots
- 3 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN



## DX2/66

- 8MB RAM
- 212MB HD
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 3 ISA slots
- 3 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2



## DX2/66

- 8MB RAM
- 212MB HD
- 128KB L2 cache
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 5 ISA slots
- 5 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2



### Key features

See "IBM ValuePoint family at a glance" for further features.

- Intel processors: i486SX-25, i486SX-33, i486DX-33, i486DX2-50/25, i486DX2-66/33
- ZIF sockets on the motherboard for instant upgrade
- Pentium P24T ready
- VESA local bus graphics
- Super-fast true-colour accelerated graphics based on the S3 chipset
- VESA spare 32-bit local bus slot
- Flash BIOS

## DX2/66

- 8MB RAM
- 340MB HD
- 128KB L2 cache
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 8 ISA slots
- 6 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2




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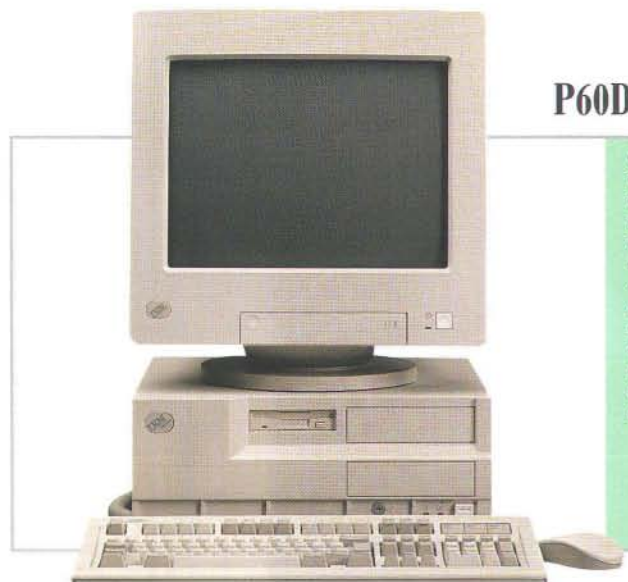
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# IBM ValuePoint Pentium

*"Blazing speed, PCI slots, plenty of expansion room, great documentation and service and support."*

Source: PC WORLD February 1994



## P60D

- 8MB RAM
- 340MB HD
- 256KB L2 cache
- 3.5" floppy
- 1MB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 5 ISA slots
- 5 Bays
- ZIF socket
- Enh. Keyb
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN or OS/2

## Key features

*See "IBM ValuePoint family at a glance" for further features.*

- Super-efficient Intel 60MHz Pentium processor
- Up to an awesome 128MB RAM
- 256KB external cache
- PCI local bus graphics
- Up to 2 slots for PCI local bus adapters
- Super-fast accelerated graphics based on the ATI chipset (on the PCI bus itself)
- Up to 2MB video DRAM

**Product of the Year, L'Ordinateur Individuel**  
Jan 1994

# IBM Helpware

*Your guarantee of worry-free computing*

**With ValuePoint, you're in safe hands**

When you buy ValuePoint you're immediately covered by IBM's unique *Helpware*.

Take a look at what's yours, FREE:

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- **Helpware Magazine** Information, news, views and workshops in an award-winning format
- **Interactive Helpware Tutorial**

**It adds up to your guarantee of worry-free computing.**

\*In the UK, on-site servicing is optional and may be purchased through your IBM dealer or IBM PC Direct.



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# The IBM ValuePoint family at a glance

Setting new standards for power, speed, versatility and value for money

With the arrival of the P-series, IBM ValuePoint can now justifiably claim to be the most sophisticated and comprehensive family of PCs available today. One that starts with sizzling i486s at really cool prices, and goes on right up to the red-hot, award-winning\* Pentium P60/D. PCs at ease with the future – fully upgradeable and future-proofed (the likes of flash BIOS, ZIF sockets and ample spare slots and bays see to that) – even the cases open at the press of a button. No screws – no fuss.

What's more, there's a range of superb, compact monitors with high-resolution, flicker-free, non-interlaced, flat screens for crisp, clear characters and graphics. From a practical 14" right up to a stunning 21", they're all ergonomically designed with optional tilt and swivel stands, complying with the most stringent European standards to ensure tireless usage.

\*PC WORLD's Power Desktop award

## IBM ValuePoint family features

- ZIF sockets on the motherboard for instant upgrade<sup>1</sup>
- Pentium P24T ready<sup>2</sup>
- Clear, true-colour SVGA graphics
- Resolutions of up to 1,280 x 1,024 supported
- Up to 2MB video DRAM
- Flash BIOS
- Up to 256KB external cache
- High level data security built into the BIOS
- Parity memory for extra peace of mind
- IBM Enhanced Keyboard<sup>1</sup>
- Pre-loaded DOS/Windows

## Take a closer look



**Easy to remove outer case.** Turn the key, release the catch and slide the case off.



**ZIF (zero insertion force) socket<sup>1</sup>.** If you need a processor upgrade – just flip the lever and slot in the new one.



**Graphics accelerator on the motherboard.** Offering a massive increase in video performance.



**All the slots you need.** Up to eight slots spare for the additional cards of your choice.



**Local bus slot<sup>3</sup>.** A spare local bus slot for the 32-bit card of your choice.



**Ample spare bays.** Enough room for the add-ons and peripherals you need.



**Heavy-duty power supply<sup>4</sup>.** For all the add-ons you'd wish to install.



**Memory expansion room galore.** For the memory to run tomorrow's programs.



<sup>1</sup>Not ValuePoint Si. <sup>2</sup>Not ValuePoint Si SX or P60/D. <sup>3</sup>VESA for ValuePoint II. VESA or PCI for ValuePoint P. Not ValuePoint Si. <sup>4</sup>Desktop, mini-tower and P/60D only.

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# Exceptional performance

## Exceptional value

Something exciting's happening. Europe's best selling family of PCs – IBM ValuePoint – has got a new member. It's called the ValuePoint P. The P stands for *performance*. (You'll soon see why.) But it could just as easily stand for *potential*. Because the ValuePoint P is designed to meet all your needs – not just now – but for a long time to come.

How? The key lies in flexibility. And in choice. For a start, the ValuePoint P is the first PC to offer you not one, but two different local bus technologies: PCI or VESA. Then, at the flip of a lever, the ZIF socket lets you upgrade your processor to Intel OverDrive or Pentium. What's more, you have the capacity for a huge 128MB

RAM as well as enough spare slots and bays for your future peripherals and add-ons (like network cards, given the ValuePoint P's *LANability*).

In the meantime, EnergyStar power management will be saving not only your money and the environment, but also meeting future EC power saving regulations. While the ValuePoint P's easy-to-use diagnostic software, pre-loaded (a first for any PC), will help you get the best out of your system.

And if that weren't enough, here's one more feature the ValuePoint P boasts: IBM. As ever, it stands for compatibility, quality, and downright value for money. Which all in all is a lot to be excited about.

### Take a closer look



**Exchangeable PCI or VESA local bus riser card<sup>1</sup>.** Choose initially between PCI or VESA local bus. Or at any time simply swap the riser card.



**Plug and Play (PnP)<sup>2</sup>.** The new standard that takes the hassle out of installing add-ons. PnP automatically identifies the new devices and reconfigures your system to match.

<sup>1</sup>Desktop and mini-tower only.

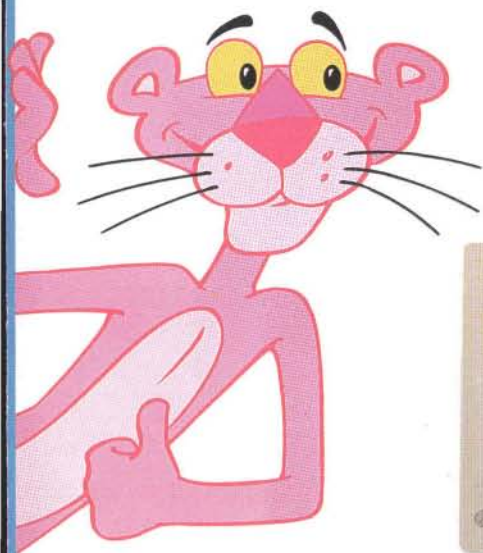
<sup>2</sup>Dependant on operating system.



# Introducing the new IBM PCs







# The IBM ValuePoint Si

*The low-price way in to high-performance computing*



**SX25**

- 4MB RAM
- 120MB HD
- 3.5" floppy
- 512KB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 3 ISA slots
- 3 Bays
- Keyboard
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN

## Key features

See "IBM ValuePoint family at a glance" for further features.

- Intel processors: i486SX-25, i486SX-33, i486DX-33, i486 DX2-50/25, i486DX2-66/33
- Up to a massive 64MB RAM
- VESA local bus graphics
- Flash BIOS
- Parity memory for extra peace of mind
- Compact footprint
- Pre-loaded DOS/Windows ready-to-run
- Case opens at the press of a button for instant upgrades

**SX33**



- 4MB RAM
- 120MB HD
- 3.5" floppy
- 512KB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 3 ISA slots
- 3 Bays
- Keyboard
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN

**DX33**



- 4MB RAM
- 120MB HD
- 3.5" floppy
- 512KB Video DRAM
- VLB Graphics
- Flash BIOS
- 3 ISA slots
- 3 Bays
- Keyboard
- IBM Mouse
- DOS/WIN

## How can I get to see an IBM ValuePoint in action?

Prices start at less than £1000\*. Please contact your local authorised dealer for a competitive price quote in your region. Call one of the numbers below for details of the location of your nearest dealer.

\*Price subject to currency fluctuations and, where applicable, local sales tax.

**IBM**

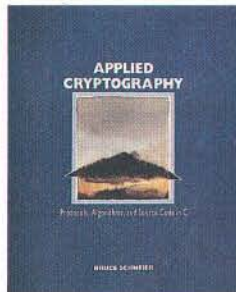


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# Levels of Secrecy



RICK GREHAN

**T**he opening sentence in the preface of *Applied Cryptography* says it all—I have to quote it: “There are two kinds of cryptography in this world: cryptography that will stop your kid sister from reading your files, and cryptography that will stop major governments from reading your files. This book is about the latter.”

You can use *Applied Cryptography* for more than one purpose. You can read it as an introduction to the mathematics of cryptography, as a resource of source code for cryptographic algorithms, or as a guide to how traffic on the information superhighway might remain secure even as the highway (supposedly) becomes more accessible.

Cryptography isn't restricted to studying the means by which a digital document is securely encoded for purposes of transmission. It can cover activities as well—activities once carried out via the transfer of paperwork, but now carried out by transactions across a network. Take digital signatures, for example. Bank A sends a transaction to bank B. The transaction is encoded, of course. But how can the clerk at bank B be sure that the transaction was authorized by the proper officer at bank A prior to being encoded and transmitted?

This is one of the topics of perhaps my favorite section of the book: cryptographic protocols. It begins with fundamentals (e.g., authentication and public-key cryptography), builds through intermediate protocols (e.g., digital signatures and subliminal channels), and moves to advanced protocols (e.g., blind signatures). The best material, however, appears in the concluding topic: esoteric protocols. Here, you'll find step-by-step procedures for such operations as secure elections and digital cash.

Some of the protocols read like descriptions of Rube Goldberg machines. I followed in fascination the step-by-step process that Alice (a hypothetical character) could use to accomplish the audit-trail-free transfer of digital cash. Alice could send a campaign contribution to her favorite senator, and no one could trace where the money had come from. And it gets worse: Alice shows up pages later using digital cash to commit a perfect kidnapping.

It also gets better. In a later chapter, we're given a brief glimpse of—no kidding—“quantum cryptography.” All it takes is some polarized light and a fiber-optic link; the message is encoded in the polarization angle of the light. What you get is an untappable link—since tapping would require measuring a quantum variable, which affects the outcome of any subsequent measurements. Sender and receiver can compare partial messages and verify the presence or absence of an eavesdropper.

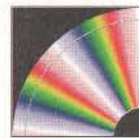
Finally, if you want code, you've got it. Not only are code fragments smattered throughout, the rear of the book contains listing after well-documented listing (all in C) of cipher routines, secure hash functions, and so forth. If you want to avoid typist's cramp, you can send \$30 to the author and get the disk set that includes all the source code from the book, plus updates and new algorithms. If you're not a programmer, don't let the presence of so much source code frighten you. The descriptions of the exchange protocols—intricate though they may be—make good reading for anyone interested in cryptography. ■

Rick Grehan is technical director of the BYTE Lab. Before coming to BYTE, he worked as a programmer. He has a B.S. in physics and applied mathematics and an M.S. in mathematics/computer science. You can reach him on the Internet or BIX at rick\_g@bix.com.

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## MINSKY GOES MULTIMEDIA

**FIRST PERSON: MARVIN MINSKY, THE SOCIETY OF MIND** The Voyager Co., 578 Broadway, Suite 406, New York, NY 10012, (212) 431-5199, \$49.95

**T**he Voyager Co., a pioneer in moving printed media to electronic media, serves up a new CD-ROM title, *First Person: Marvin Minsky, The Society of Mind*. The disc contains the complete text of Minsky's *The Society of Mind*. This work attempts to explain just how the mind works. In it, Minsky proposes how nonthinking matter gets to the point where it can reason, comprehend the world, and ultimately consider itself. His theory is that thought involves small agents or processes that manage small tasks. These agents, operating as a collective society, combine synergistically to form consciousness.

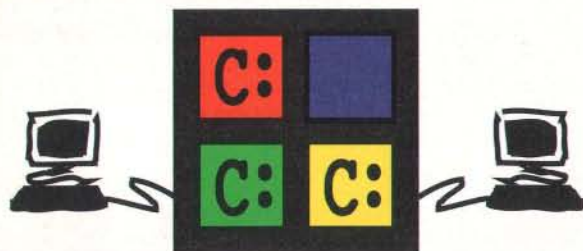
The CD-ROM improves on the book in several ways. The original illustrations were updated and redrawn in color, and the text has hypertext links to an extensive glossary and bibliography. The material is leavened with animations and QuickTime movies—whose subjects range from Minsky explaining theories on thought to a tour of his living room—that make an interesting subject matter entertaining.

The one problem that I had with the interface was locating Voyager's standard Tool palette, which allows you to easily navigate through the pages and return from the glossary. (It's in the Books menu. This menu is normally not visible. However, if you're familiar with the Voyager products, this isn't a problem.)

Given the room a CD-ROM offers and Voyager's grasp of the technology, I'm just a little disappointed that Minsky didn't take the extra step of expanding the subject matter. Once you get past the embellishments, there's not much beyond the original material on the disc. If you're intrigued by Minsky's theories, the CD-ROM presents them in new and interesting ways. If you disagree with his ideas, there's nothing new to convince you otherwise.

—Tom Thompson





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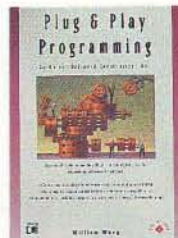
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## Books & CD-ROMs

### SEEKING THE GRAIL

**PLUG & PLAY PROGRAMMING: AN OBJECT-ORIENTED CONSTRUCTION KIT** by William Wong  
M&T Books, ISBN 1-55851-302-7, \$39.95 (with disk)



**P**rogramming fads come and go, but the search for the Holy Grail of productivity, reusability, and simplicity continues unabated. *Plug & Play Programming: An Object-Oriented Construction Kit* by William Wong brings us one giant step closer to the goal. It moves beyond the theory that object-oriented languages like C++ provide the ability to generate reusable code into the practical realm of real-world technique.

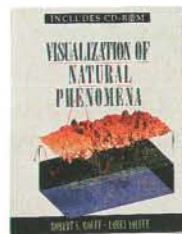
The basic premise is simple. Why shouldn't programming, at some level, be as simple as hooking up your stereo system or, at a lower level, designing an electronic circuit by connecting standard parts. The missing ingredient in software design is standardized connections.

Wong addresses this problem by creating a standard object interconnection: the plug. Plugs (and their analogous sockets) allow objects to be connected in a consistent manner that leads to code that is more readable, understandable, and flexible.

*Plug & Play* includes a detailed examination of the source code that is available on the accompanying IBM disk. The code is usable by any ANSI C++ compiler. You can also use plugs with other object-oriented languages, and the book has a chapter on Smalltalk and Borland Pascal with Objects.

Using plugs and sockets is not a panacea that will magically make programming simpler, as the author himself recognizes. Wong describes this programming technique as "just another tool," although it's a powerful one that will shape the way you design your applications.

—Raymond GA Côté



### VISUALIZING DATA

**VISUALIZATION OF NATURAL PHENOMENA**  
by Robert S. Wolff and Larry Yaeger Springer-Verlag, ISBN 0-387-97809-7, \$59.95

**W**ith its large format and classy production, this 374-page volume might be mistaken for a coffee-table book. But *Visualization of Natural Phenomena* is not for the browser interested in slick images; rather, it's for scientists, mathematicians, and engineers who are ready to learn more about the benefits of visualization.

The book includes a CD-ROM (in Macintosh HFS format) and is organized around applications (e.g., imaging numbers and visualization of multivariate systems). While the CD provides you with real-world examples of on-screen images and animation (some with sound), the low-resolution displays only hint at the character and quality of images found on true scientific-visualization workstations. ■

—Scott Wallace



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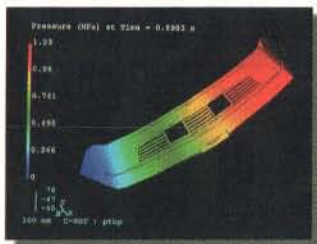
Metacard 1.3 from Metacard Corp.



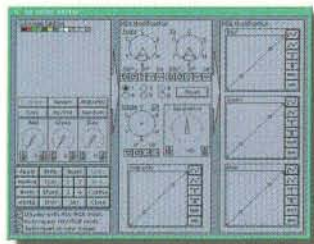
MOSS from Moss Systems Limited



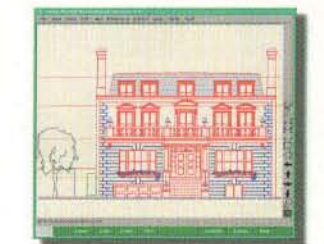
Voltcad & CADIBA from IB COM Software AG



C-Mold from AC Technology



XV (Shareware) from John Bradley



XCad Designer from Digital Multimedia Limited

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advantage of faster PCs on the network for tasks that require extra power. And for tasks that might tie up a user's own desktop unit—like a long data base sort—DESQview/X allows users to send the task to an under-utilized PC (or printer) anywhere on the network.

When you consider that a 386 PC with as little as 4MB RAM and a 40MB hard disk can run DESQview/X, purchasing X Window terminals is no longer economically practical.

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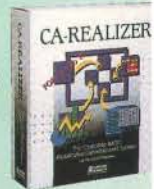
Type the words you want to find and Personal Assistant will immediately locate every file on your local or network drives containing those words whether from a word processor, a database, or a spreadsheet. Key features: full-text search capability with phrase, proximity and boolean expressions support; files are indexed and updated dynamically in the background; the ability to access, view, print, cut and paste files from virtually any word processor, database or spreadsheet running on DOS or MS Windows, including some Macintosh programs. In addition, Microsoft OLE and most popular graphic file formats are fully supported.



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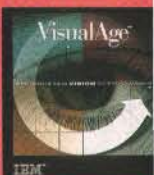


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## PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

### IBM VisualAge by IBM

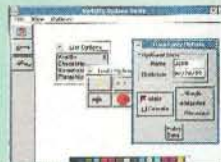
A client/server application builder that combines the power of a complete Smalltalk environment with the ease of visual programming by connecting pre-fabricated, reusable components. It supports multiple client/server models & communications protocols, access to multiple IBM & non-IBM databases, & multiple legacy code interfaces. Support for DB/2 and DDCS are standard. It supports IBM's system object model (SOM), the latest level 4 CUA, including multimedia, & the Smalltalk environment based on industry standards. The team version includes a LA repository, versioning control and configuration management.



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## object-Menu by Lifeboat Publishing

object-Menu is the way to quickly create powerful object-oriented applications. Built-in aesthetics make it easy to create interface styling such as Windows, Motif, or your own custom design. Portability to DOS, Windows/NT and OS/2 enable you to offer your product to multiple target markets with a single engineering effort. And, object-Menu's intuitive architecture, straightforward methodology and Visual Design tool actually speed GUI development to allow you more time to focus on your application.



DOS or Windows List: \$299 Ours: \$269  
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## WATCOM FORTRAN 77<sup>32</sup> Version 9.5 by WATCOM

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## RoboHELP® 2.6 by Blue Sky Software

RoboHELP® 2.6, the best-selling Help Authoring Tool for Windows & Windows NT, offers full document to help system conversion & vice versa. Turns Word for Windows into a fully functional hypertext authoring system capable of producing Windows Help files as easily as it does plain text. Fill in the actual help text when prompted. RoboHELP takes care of generating the RTF, HPJ & H files. Link tester allows you to simulate your design before you compile. Full support of Word 2.0 & Word 6.0, & all features in the Windows Help Engine, such as macros, secondary windows, & multiple hotspot graphics.



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## NEW THIS MONTH

### Crystal VM by Crystalogic, Inc.

Crystal VM is a library of dynamic virtual memory management functions that provides access to all available memory resources including EMS, XMS and Virtual Memory. Tight, compact and powerful. Easy to learn and use. Perfect for graphics, data collection, large data files or any applications that use large amounts of data. Includes support for Microsoft, Borland or any ANSI C or C++ compiler. Quick reference card included. No royalties.



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### GFA-BASIC Compiler for Windows by GFA Software Technologies, Inc.

GFA SOFTWARE announces the release of the first BASIC compiler for Windows. For the first time ever, BASIC programmers can create a true Windows EXE, DLL, or VBX. The GFA-BASIC Compiler paves the way for BASIC and "C" programmers to start writing fast, robust Windows applications quickly. Benchmarks place the new Compiler at 25-50% faster than C or C++. The GFA-Basic Compiler ships with OPTLINK from SLR.



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### Mwave™ Developers Toolkit with IBM WindSurfer™ Bundle by Intermetrics, Inc.

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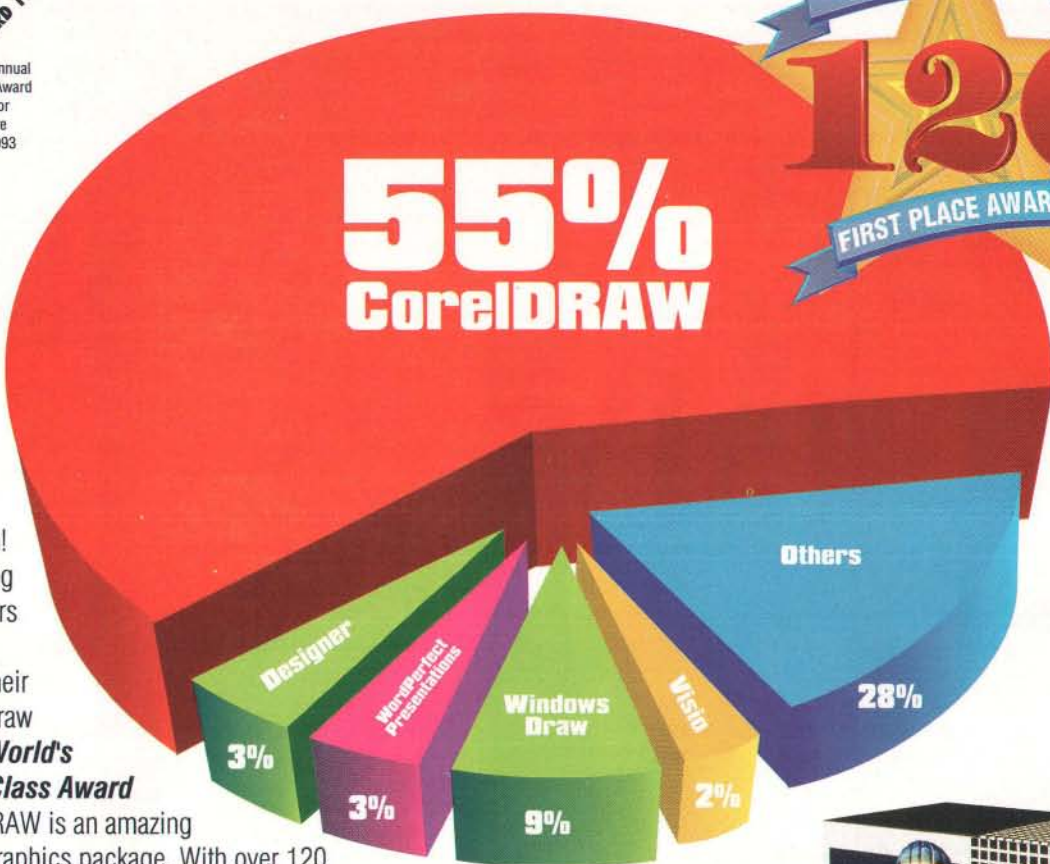


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# The Fine Art of CD-ROM Publishing

DICK POUNTAIN

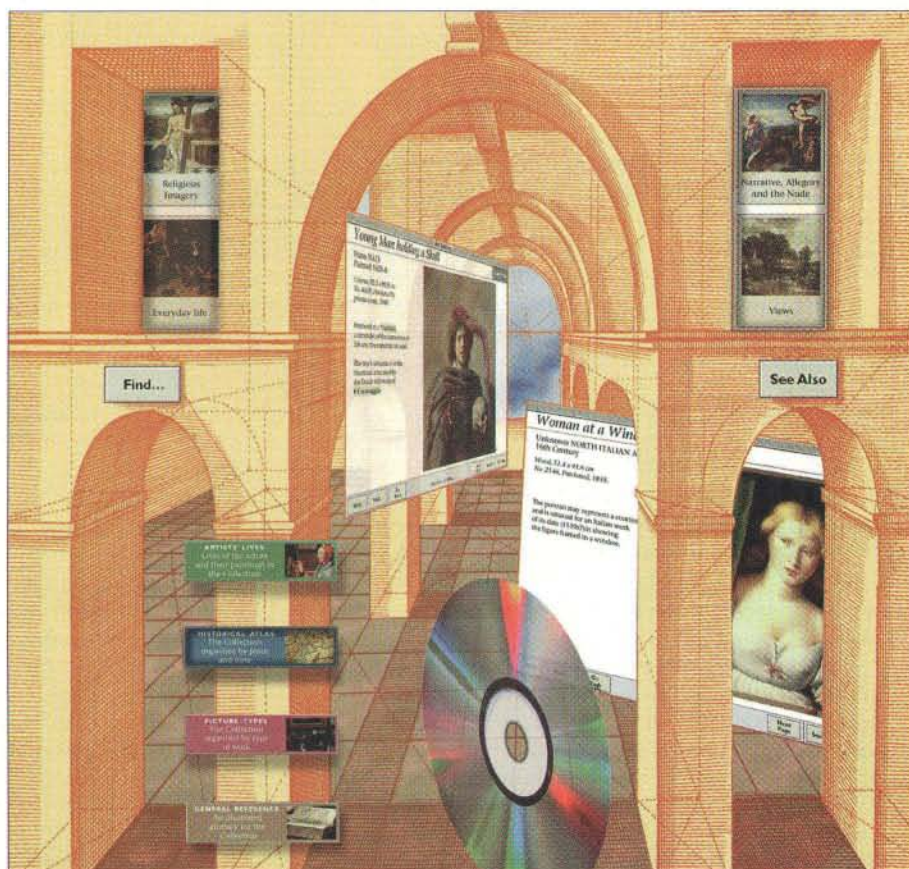
Until recently, I'd been distinctly unimpressed by the quality of CD-ROMs, and I was beginning to think that the good old printed book was safe for another century. All it took to change my mind was Microsoft's new Art Gallery CD-ROM, which reproduces all 2200 paintings from the National Gallery in London.

The quality of the illustrations in Art Gallery is excellent—even on a humble SVGA display—and its hypertext user interface enables you to browse and make connections in ways that an art book simply can't match. As well as indexing the whole collection by name, subject matter, time, and geography, Art Gallery employs ingenious animations to explain painting techniques, compositional devices, color schemes, and symbolism that the painters used. It is like visiting the gallery with a team of art historians at your elbow, which is not surprising since the National Gallery's experts were intimately involved in designing Art Gallery.

## Virtual Visits

A CD-ROM is no substitute for standing before the original paintings, but it can prepare you so that you know what you're looking for when you do visit a gallery. The fact that I live in London and regularly visit the National Gallery probably colors my enthusiasm for Art Gallery a little, but Microsoft has plans to produce similar CD-ROMs for other great art collections, and I hope it will use the same excellent user interface for them all.

I look forward to the day when I can have all the world's great paintings at my fingertips in a single bookshelf of CD-ROMs. In addition, I look forward to the day when all publishers follow the lead of the National Gallery in examining beforehand how material can best be transported and displayed in electronic format.



MAFIC YANKUS © 1994

**Microsoft's Art Gallery demonstrates how materials normally presented in traditional media can successfully migrate to electronic publishing**

This is the secret to successful electronic publishing.

## The Micro Gallery

Microsoft's Art Gallery CD-ROM is directly derived from an interactive on-line system called Micro Gallery, which is available free of charge to the public in the National Gallery's new Sainsbury Wing in Trafalgar Square. This new building, the first major extension to the gallery in 50 years, holds the gallery's early Renaissance collection. The Micro Gallery, which the American

Express Foundation paid for with a \$1,000,000 sponsorship, is a long thin room just off the ground-floor entrance, which holds a network of 12 keyboard-less Macintosh workstations that are built flush to the wall and fitted with 19-inch touch-sensitive screens. Visitors have free access to the Micro Gallery to browse the gallery's collection. For a small fee, you can make black-and-white prints of particular paintings or print a personalized map showing the locations of a desired list of paintings. *continued*



## Bacchus and Ariadne

TITIAN  
1522-3

Signed on the urn, left foreground:  
titianus f. Canvas, 175.2 x 190.5 cm  
No. 35, Purchased, 1826.

The painting is one of a famous series by **Titian**, Titian and the Ferrarese artist **Dosso Dossi**, commissioned for the Camerino d'Alabastro, (the Alabaster Room) in the Castle in Ferrara.

The series was ordered by Alfonso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, who also tried to get **Michelangelo** and **Raphael** to contribute in the 1510s. Titian's painting was in fact a substitute for one with a similar subject which the Duke had commissioned from Raphael.



NEXT PAGES... Commission and Context; Narrative Sources; Composition; Visual Style © 1993 The National Gallery, London

The Art Gallery uses subdued shading in its text to indicate links to animations and other information. The copyright notice does not appear on-screen, but is imprinted in files captured from the CD-ROM.

The National Gallery was founded in 1824 to hold the U.K.'s national collection of western European paintings. It contains about 2200 works from over 700 artists, dating from the thirteenth to the early twentieth centuries and includes many major works of Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, and Poussin, as well as a fine early Renaissance collection.

It is not perhaps the collection you would have expected to pioneer computerization—some high-tech twentieth-century gallery like Paris's Pompidou Center or the Getty would seem superficially to be a more likely candidate. A precondition of the National Gallery's success was the fact that its collection, while of outstandingly high quality, is relatively small, and almost all its pictures are on public display rather than in storage. This meant that a complete interactive catalog was feasible using personal computer technology from the late 1980s; however, museums with much larger collections would have to choose between using expensive mainframe systems or cataloging only parts of their collections. Even so a forward-looking management and a generous sponsor were vital in realizing the opportunity.

The gallery appointed an internal project manager who, in turn, recruited an outside software house, Cognitive Applications of Brighton, U.K., to create the necessary software. Graduates of the AI department of the nearby University of Sussex started this firm in 1985 and acquired special expertise in Macintosh programming and in designing interactive user interfaces. A team of up to 10 people from the gallery

and Cognitive Applications put in 23 worker-years of development time spread over two-and-a-half years.

The design team quickly decided that the most important goal would be a fast response time, which would allow untrained visitors to browse the catalog in a spontaneous and relaxed fashion. Quantified, this meant that each painting should be retrieved in 1 second or less. Given the limits of 1989 personal computer technology, this decision more or less determined the technical approach. Analog video storage had already been ruled out on grounds of poor visual quality, but having chosen to go digital, there was then no affordable network technology that would support an acceptable client/server implementation (if starting today, you might consider an ATM [Asynchronous Transfer Mode] network over optic fiber). Optical disk storage was also too slow.

Only magnetic storage could handle the job, so Micro Gallery was designed around Mac IIx workstations (the fastest Mac then available). Each workstation contained a copy of the entire picture database on its local 1.3-GB hard drive. An Appletalk LAN is used outside public hours to perform maintenance updates only; it is not for interactive retrieval. This distributed storage scheme has the added advantage of being very robust; when one workstation goes down, it does not affect the others.

For displays, the team chose 19-inch Radius touchscreen monitors with an extra fine dot pitch of 82 dpi (compared to the normal Mac 72 dpi) and a refresh rate higher than 70 Hz. To further enhance the appearance of these screens, all the text is

antialiased in software.

The Micro Gallery catalog is a large publication of some 4500 pages with 300,000 words of text and 12,000 color illustrations; therefore, fitting it all onto even a 1.3-GB disk required further radical design decisions. To achieve acceptable picture quality, you might assume that the illustrations would have to be in 24-bit true color, but Cognitive Applications made no such assumption. Instead, it experimented with display depths of 24, 16, and 8 bits and discovered that 24-bit images were so large as to require hardware-assisted compression, and even then, the required response times could not be met.

Finally, the team bravely decided to go with 8-bit images, employing special palette optimization techniques to achieve adequate image quality. The strategy was spectacularly successful, and even technically knowledgeable people who visit the Micro Gallery have great trouble believing the displays are not 24-bit. Plumping for 8-bit images also paved the way for Microsoft to turn Micro Gallery into the Art Gallery CD-ROM; only a few high-end Mac users and fewer PC users have 24-bit display hardware, so using 8-bit format opened up Art Gallery for the rest of us.

The Macintosh and Windows versions of Art Gallery contain almost exactly the same software used in the Micro Gallery, reduced in resolution from 1152 by 882 pixels to 640 by 480 pixels, which the less-expensive Macs and SVGA PCs can handle, and, of course, a mouse replaces touchscreen controls. If you try to run Art Gallery on a video adapter that doesn't support 256 colors, it warns you that the results will not be acceptable but will try it anyway; thus, you can even run it on a monochrome PowerBook. The Macintosh version of Art Gallery retains the anti-aliased body text, but the PC version had to drop this feature, as Windows doesn't properly support multibit fonts.

### Acquiring the Data

The Micro Gallery project and National Gallery CD-ROM benefited from some ongoing work at the National Gallery. In this regard, they are excellent examples of how the new media can leverage off the old. The National Gallery's photographic department already had a rolling program for photographing the complete collection onto 10- by 8-inch color transparencies, and in 1986, the National Gallery had produced a written catalog using computer typesetting. Both of these projects helped the Micro Gallery get off to a flying start. A handful of the less important pictures have only been photographed in black and



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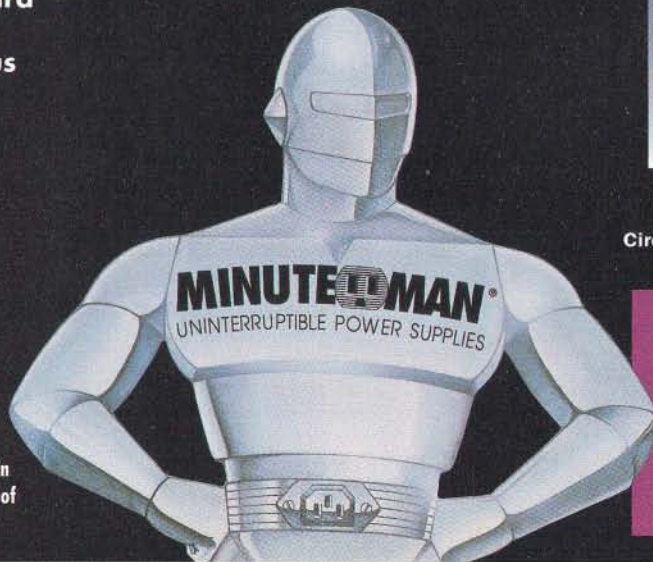
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white and appear as such in the Micro Gallery and the Art Gallery. Also, some pictures had been photographed in less-than-ideal conditions (e.g., tungsten light), and the team used Adobe Photoshop to color-correct these images manually.

It took two years to scan all the transparencies on a Sharp JX-600, for which Cognitive Applications had to write custom scanner drivers to achieve the desired results. A strategic decision was made to scan everything at 24 bits so that scanning could begin before the final display depth was decided, and thus the scans could be reused if a 24-bit version was needed in the future. This demanded vast storage space, which was met in the early days by Syquest cartridges and later by erasable optical drives.

Most pictures in the Micro/Art Gallery appear at three different sizes: first as an 80- by 80-pixel thumbnail used in menu selections, then in position on the page, and finally zoomed to full-screen height. Run-time software enlargement from a single 8-bit master degrades the image quality too much, so three separate 8-bit bit maps are dithered down from each 24-bit master and stored in the run-time system.

Cognitive Applications evaluated various image-compression schemes, including the fractal compression scheme from Iterated Systems that Microsoft uses in its Encarta. The conclusion was that dithering to 8 bits is in itself the most effective and fastest compression for this particular material. Fractal compression of the 24-bit scans achieved a 3-to-1 compression ratio (as did going from 24 to 8 bits), but fractal images took longer to decompress and fractal compression lost more fine detail from the paintings. RLE (run-length encoding) schemes were ineffective in further compressing the dithered 8-bit images, which look pretty much like random bit streams to an RLE algorithm.

### Optimizing the Palette

The excellent picture quality in the Micro/Art Gallery is entirely dependent on the choice of an optimal color mapping. Both Macintosh and PC SVGA 8-bit video adapters support 256-color display modes in which a CLUT (color lookup table) or palette holds the 256 current display colors chosen from some much larger color space (18 bits or around 250,000 colors for SVGA adapters). In practice, both the Macintosh and Windows operating systems reserve 16 or so colors for GUI purposes so that only around 240 colors are really selectable. Thus, the challenge is to choose exactly those 240 colors that will represent a particular painting or group of

paintings as effectively as possible.

This task was made a little easier due to the National Gallery's collection containing mostly oil paintings over 100 years old, which use a more limited gamut of colors than is used today or even in early twentieth-century paintings. Finding the best palette involved a mix of computer and manual methods. Cognitive Applications wrote a program (see the text box "The Palette Optimization Algorithm") that analyzed a particular 24-bit scan and extracted a 256-color palette that distributed the color content of the picture as evenly as possible in a mathematical sense. In 1990, this was still fairly esoteric stuff, but nowadays, commercial tools like Adobe Photoshop include this capability, and indeed Cognitive Applications itself now uses Adobe Photoshop and DeBabelizer from Equilibrium Technology to extract palettes.

For the first Micro Gallery prototypes, the team tried to use a separate customized

palette for each picture, but the adoption of menu pages containing several thumbnails made this impractical. Then the team tried one palette per page, but this still caused unsightly and disconcerting screen artifacts when turning from one page to another, and a solution using a special transition palette of neutral colors was only partly effective. It became clear that a single palette would have to work for the whole collection (see the figure "One Palette Fits All").

All 2200 scans were run through the color-mapping program and combined to yield a single 240-color palette. The National Gallery curators then reviewed the paintings as they appeared in this palette and suggested manual adjustments to the final mapping. This was a necessary step, because while a computer program can achieve a mathematically optimum mapping, it doesn't take any account of the subject matter and meaning of the paintings or of human aesthetic preferences.

*continued*

### One Palette Fits All

The decision to use a single palette across the collection made choosing the palette decisive in the success of the publishing effort. After the computers were finished, experts from the National Gallery tweaked the palette so that it worked across the range of styles represented by the collection.



*The Wilton Diptych, anonymous*



*The Supper at Emmaus, Caravaggio*



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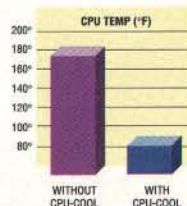
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For example, given a Bellini *Virgin and Child*, the program might correctly allocate as many shades of blue for the Virgin's cloak as flesh tones for the faces. But a human expert regards the faces as more important than the cloak and would like to dedicate more palette space to flesh tones, to achieve better modeling of faces and limbs without visible tone steps. Sim-

ilar arguments might be made for the greens in landscapes, to which the human eye is particularly sensitive.

The final palette derived for the Micro/Art Gallery is enriched in flesh, green, and brown tones and relatively depleted in primary colors. If you were to use the same procedure to scan a collection of twentieth-century abstract paintings by

Kandinsky, Rothko, and other artists, you might arrive at a completely different palette.

### The Art Book that Moves

The most significant advantage that a computer screen offers over an art book is the possibility of moving the images, and the Micro/Art Gallery project exploits this advantage by using animation to illustrate features of the paintings; another reason to be thankful for those 8-bit images.

Many of the animations simply consist of "draining" color from the painting to a monochrome image and then selectively reintroducing color to highlight certain groups of figures and compositional blocks. Another trick is to superimpose text labels that explain the symbolism of various objects in a picture. To illustrate perspective theories, you can overlay converging lines and grids or planes that cut up the picture space.

Other animations explore the way pictures were produced (e.g., by superimposing an x-ray view over the paint to reveal earlier work underneath). A Bellini fresco is dissected into the successive layers of applied paint, while a portrait of the duke of Wellington sprouts the extra medals Goya added at the end of the Peninsular War. Perhaps the most ambitious animation is for Vermeer's *Young Woman Standing at a Virginal*. To illustrate the accuracy of Vermeer's perspective (he may have used a camera obscura), Art Gallery constructs a 3-D model from the painting and then flies through three different views of the room.

Some important paintings (e.g., Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* or Poussin's *Adoration of the Golden Calf*) warrant three or more animations dealing with composition, narrative, and construction methods. One animation that makes me smile is for the *Adoration of the Golden Calf*. It demonstrates that Poussin cribbed a group of figures from one of his own earlier paintings by simply flying the group from the earlier picture to the later while flipping it 180° horizontally.

### Invitation to Users

According to Cognitive Applications' director, Ben Rubenstein, the guiding principle in the design of Micro Gallery's user interface was "to make it more like a book than a screen." Many people still have a phobia about computers, and people who regularly visit art galleries might be expected to be less at ease with computers than the average. The result of following this principle is a roaring success judged from the overwhelmingly favorable comments

## The Palette-Optimization Algorithm

The program that Cognitive Applications wrote to extract optimum 8-bit color mappings from 24-bit scans of paintings employed a published algorithm by Hekbert, while commercial products like Adobe Photoshop use closely related algorithms. The algorithm is topological in nature, working on the proximity of colors in a 3-D color space.

First, you must resolve all the 24-bit pixels that make up a single scan (around 300,000 of them in the case of a 640- by 480-pixel image) into their 8-bit RGB components. You can then plot each pixel to a color point in the 3-D 24-bit RGB color cube, as shown in the figure "Plotting Pixels in the RGB Color Cube."

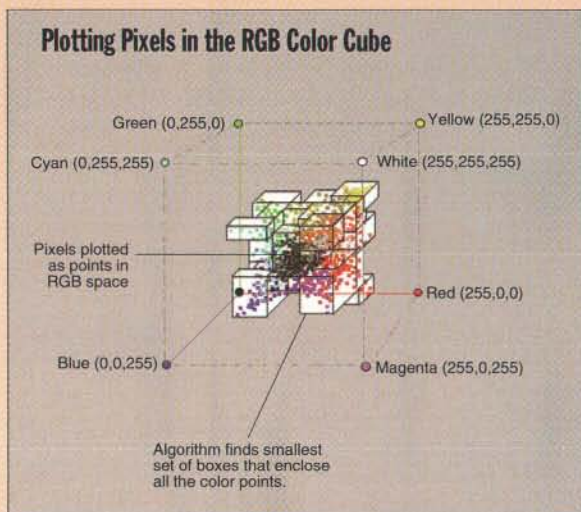
Now sort the R, G, and B components to determine their maximum and minimum values and use these limits to "shrink" the color cube down to the smallest rectangular box in RGB space that will contain all the pixels.

You split this box into two smaller boxes along its longest axis and repeat the shrinking process on these smaller boxes. The main loop of the algorithm repeats this process of choosing a box to split, splitting it, and then shrinking the fragments, adding one new box at each iteration. Variations on the algorithm can use different criteria to select which box to split and how to split it. In general, you choose the biggest box to split, and split it to yield two equal parts. Size might be measured by the number of color points the box contains, or by the total number of pixels, since many pixels may have mapped to the same color point. Similarly, equality might refer to equal numbers of color points, pixels, or even simply equal volumes of the color space.

After 256 iterations of this process, you'll have 256 bins into which the color content of the original scanned picture has been distributed as evenly as possible by whichever criterion you used. The optimal palette now consists of the color held in each of these final boxes. In general, each box will contain more than one color point, so you need a third selection function to pick just one; it might be the point closest to the center of the box, or an average weighted for the number of actual mapped pixels.

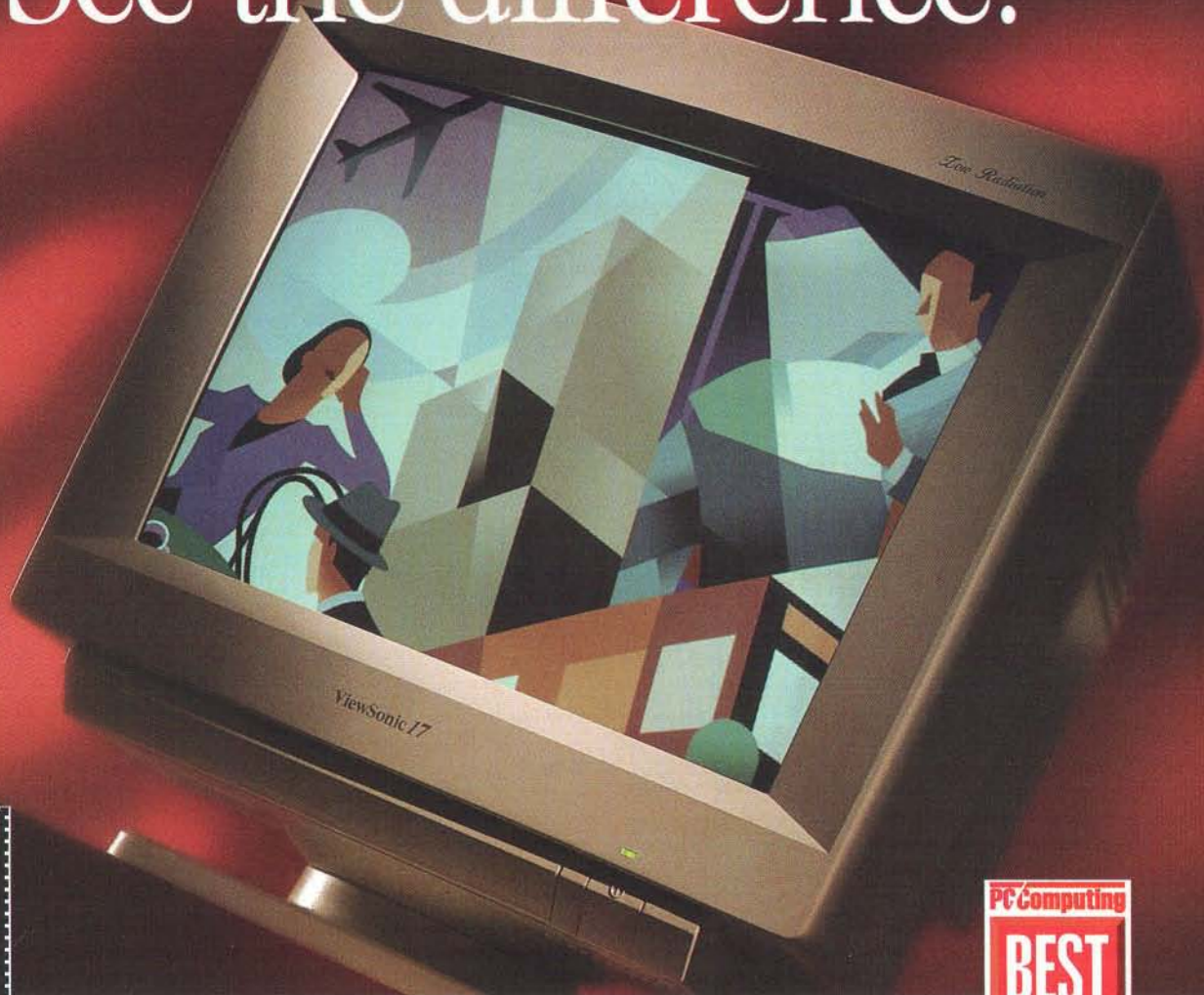
This algorithm gives a "fair" representation of the color distribution in a given picture, but in practice, absolute fairness may not be desirable. A human expert might prefer to sacrifice some colors and emphasize others to better suit the content and meaning of the painting, matters of which the algorithm can know nothing.

**Reference:** Hekbert, P. "Color Image Quantization for Frame Buffer Displays," *Computer Graphics*, Vol.16, no. 3, 1982.





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in the National Gallery visitor's book, and the fact that utilization of the workstations runs at close to 100 percent every day.

The graphics style of the screens is very book-like, with black-on-white text set in a serif typeface arranged in columns around the pictures. The strict avoidance of colored backgrounds or lettering in the text enhances the impact of the paintings and makes them the focus of interest on the page. All computerish "screen furniture" is confined to a narrow navigation bar at the foot of the screen, and no icons,

scroll bars, or menu bars are in sight. "Hot text" that invokes a hypertext link to another page or a pop-up information window is lightly shaded, and you quickly learn that clicking any shaded area will take you somewhere else. Click on any picture marked with the little four-arrows sign to zoom it and then click anywhere to unzoom it again.

## Fingertip Control

Hypertext-links aside, navigation is performed using four buttons at the bottom

of the screen. The two most important buttons are Next Page, which allows you to turn the page like a book, and Go Back, which allows you to return to the last page you saw (even if you left it via a hypertext jump) and retain an effectively unlimited memory trail of pages.

The Contents button takes you straight to the contents page, which is the nerve center of the browsing system. You are offered five different viewpoints into the National Gallery collection: The Painter's Lives view lets you look up painters by name; the Historical Atlas lets you look at a particular country and a particular century; Picture Types enables you to browse landscapes, still lives, portraits, nudes, and whatever; General Reference is an overall index so that you can find an explanation of, say, *gesso* or *chiaroscuro*; and finally Guided Tours offers you one of four automated sessions with themes like Composition and Perspective and Making paintings.

On the Art Gallery CD-ROM, a guide's high-quality digitized voice accompanies you on these tours; however, for the Micro Gallery application, sound was deemed too distracting to other users. In addition, Art Gallery uses voice to excellent effect in the Painter's Lives section to give the correct pronunciation of names. This feature is very welcome indeed when you are faced with a Pollaiuolo, Koekkoek, or Reymerswaele.

The See Also button presents you with a context-sensitive contents page that offers you cues for further browsing—painters of the same period or similar style or paintings whose subject matter is related to the one you are currently viewing. This is the most innovative feature of Art Gallery, and a few hours spent following the See Also cues can be a genuinely educational experience. A dreaded pop-up menu is also available for the experienced computer user. The menu is well hidden behind the Options button, which allows you to print or copy the screen to the clipboard and perform text searches on the entire CD-ROM.

It's no accident that the user interface to Art Gallery is much simpler and more intuitive than the Macintosh/Windows GUIs that support it, for Cognitive Applications tried out many prototypes of the system on museum staff and members of the public and then stripped away or refined features to arrive at the current model. Perhaps art history is not the only thing you can learn in this Art Gallery. ■

Dick Pountain is a BYTE contributing editor based in London. You can reach him on the Internet or BIX at dickp@bix.com.

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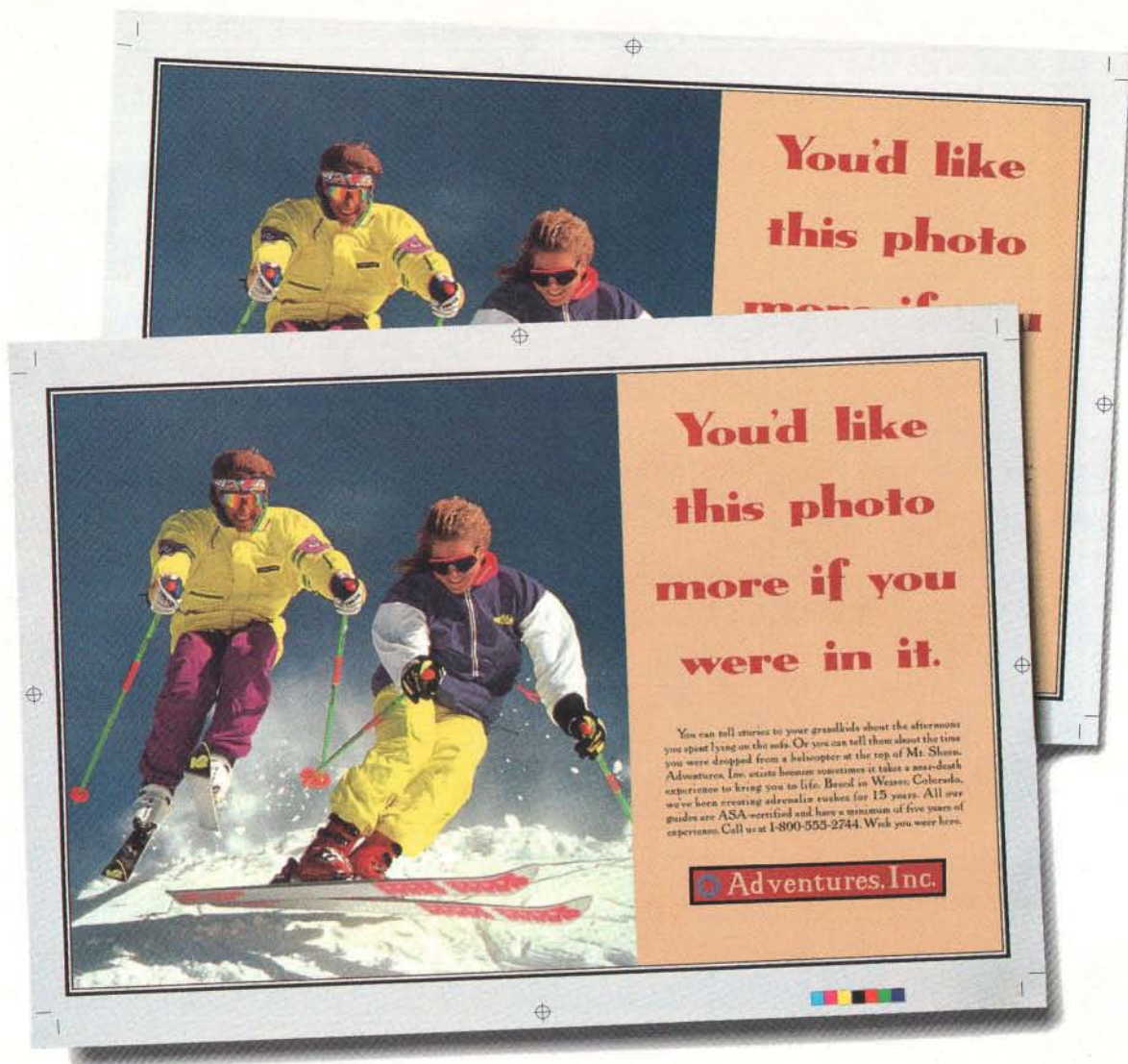
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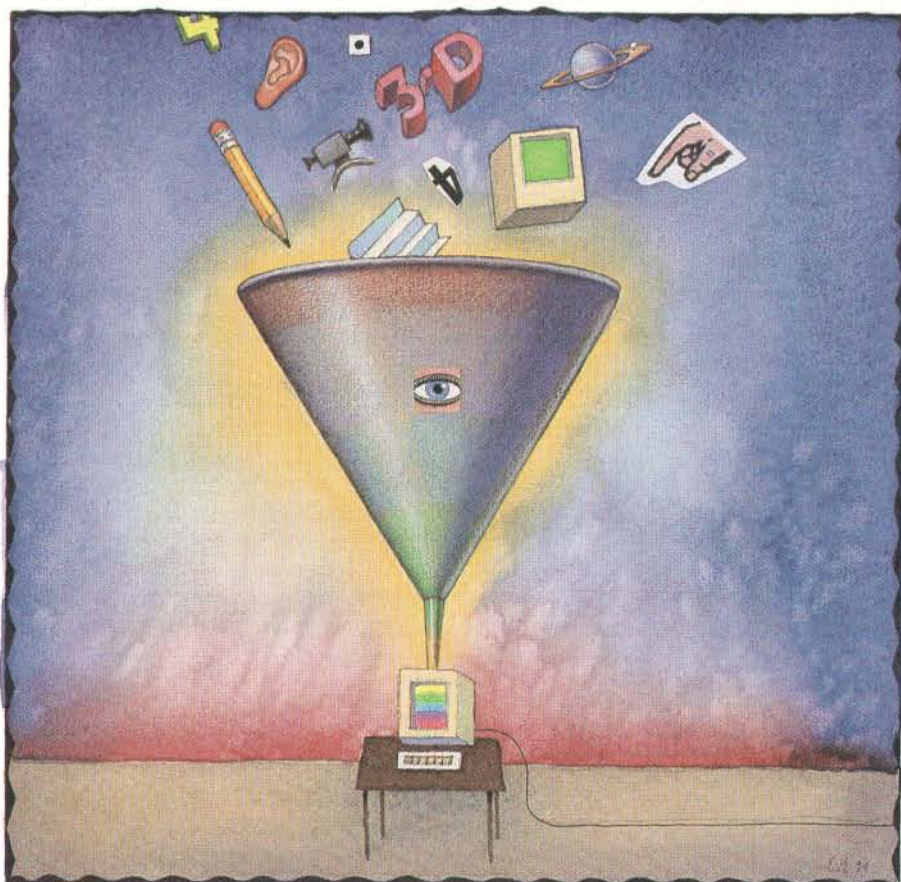
The MVP integrates onto a single die five very powerful, fully programmable processors, a sophisticated DMA controller with an external memory interface, 50 KB of SRAM (static RAM), and video timing control (see the figure "The MVP" on page 58). Of the 50 KB of SRAM, 32 KB can be shared among all five processors to support many different parallel-processing approaches. The MVP chip is targeted at solving the problems that are inherent in multimedia and other applications that require a large amount of processing.

## Driven by Design

The MVP did not spring fully formed from the memories of TI's CAD workstations. Three basic algorithmic areas drove the MVP's design definition: image processing and recognition, video and still-image compression, and high-performance computer graphics.

The design of the MVP's signal-processing components was driven by the needs of image-processing, image-recognition, and image-compression algorithms. The latter category includes convolution and frequency-domain transforms that are multiplication-intensive. For example, the JPEG and MPEG standards require DCT (discrete cosine transform) frequency transforms, so TI paid particular attention to DCT performance and precision.

While the algorithms drove the design of the signal-processing components, the sheer volume of signal processing that is required by these algorithms prompted the decision to include mul-



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## TI's new MVP chip brings parallel-processing power to multimedia applications

tiples DSPs on the IC. The design team also discerned that, in general, the primary multimedia algorithms required 16-bit or less fixed-point multiplies with 32-bit accumulates. Higher precision was not required in the signal-processing components.

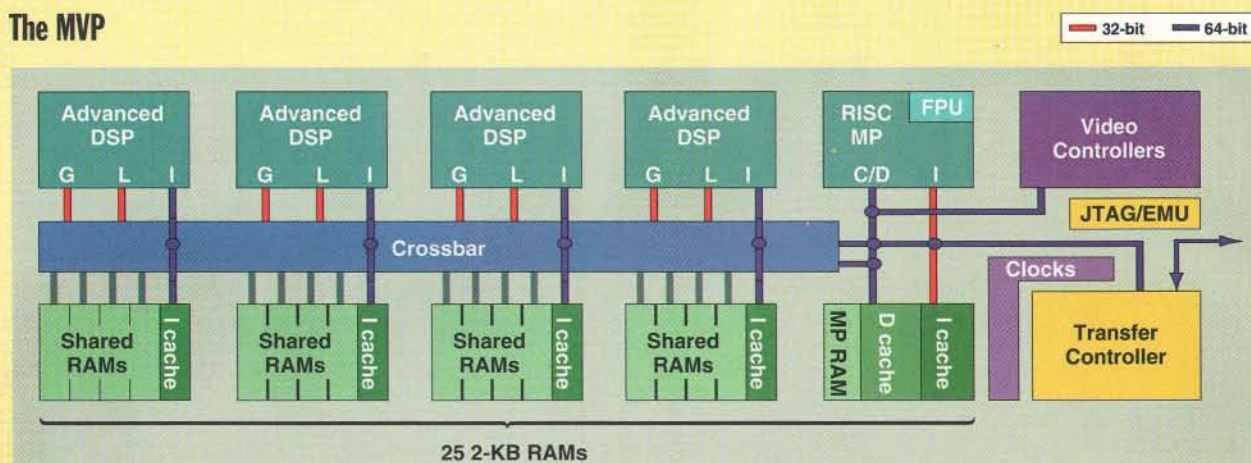
Historically, DSPs have not been very good at processing the bit-field manipulations used in some compression algorithms or at manipulating multiple-pixel quantities, such as those

encountered in graphics block moves. The MVP's signal processors differ from traditional DSPs most markedly in their ability to manipulate bit fields and process multiple pixels in parallel through their data paths. To reflect these differences, we call these components *advanced DSPs*, or ADSPs. The MVP contains four of them.

One important point about ADSPs is that, although they are optimized for certain *types* of algorithms, they don't dedicate hardware to any specific algorithm. The goal of the MVP is to support elemental operations that can be used to implement any



## The MVP



Each ADSP has two independent 32-bit data ports (G and L in the figure) and a 64-bit instruction cache input (I). The MP has a single 64-bit data port (C/D) and a 32-bit instruction port. The TC (Transfer Controller) has a 64-bit internal port and a 64-bit external port. The ports of the various processors and TC are connected to 25 2-KB RAMs via a crossbar-switch network. The crossbar supports approximately 2.4 GBps of data, plus 1.8 GBps of instructions.

algorithm. This approach pays dividends when vendors develop new algorithms for current problems and when they use the power and programmability of the MVP to develop completely new applications.

#### Inside the Advanced DSPs

The MVP's four ADSPs provide most of the chip's raw performance. Each can perform in excess of 10 RISC-like operations per cycle (see the figure "The Advanced DSPs").

To specify the multiple parallel operations that they are able to perform, the ADSPs employ a wide instruction word of 64 bits. This instruction word has fields that independently control the data unit, along with its multiplier and data path, and the two address units. All instructions nominally execute in a single cycle.

Each ADSP has a register file of 44 programmer-visible registers. Any register can be a source to, or a destination from, the ALU data path. This includes the program counter, the address registers, and the loop-control registers. Conditional PC (program counter) relative jumps, for example, are performed by conditionally writing to the PC. The register set is broken into files based on register functions. Most of the registers support more than one access per cycle, with the register file in the data unit supporting over 10 accesses in a single cycle.

An ADSP data unit consists of

three major elements: the data-unit user registers, the multiplier, and the ALU data path. The instruction set supports independent multiplier and ALU data path operations. The multiplier can perform one 16- by 16-bit multiply or two 8- by 8-bit multiplies in a single cycle. The multiplier also has a rounding option, a direct result of maintaining the specified accuracy for the video-compression standards. Whereas the ALU data path can operate on any of the registers, the multiplier is restricted to

operating on eight data-file registers.

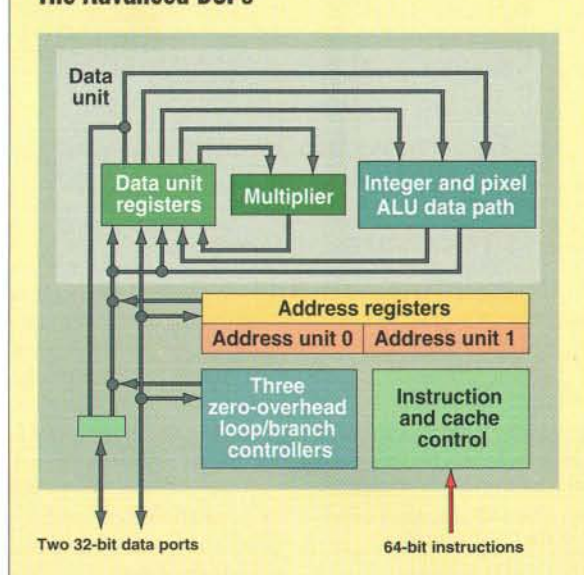
The ALU data path includes a barrel rotator, a mask generator, a 1-to-*n* bit expander (which is used for binary-to-color transforms, among other things), and a three-input ALU that can combine the mask or expander output with register data to create over 2000 different processing options. The ALU has a 32-bit data path that performs logical and arithmetic functions, and it can combine these to support masking or merging in a single pass. The ALU can be split into smaller sections to perform multiple 8- or 16-bit operations in parallel.

Normally, ALU operations set four status bits: carry, negative, zero, and overflow. Any or all of these bits can be protected from being modified by the current instruction. The instruction set supports both conditional source selection between a pair of registers and writing of the result based on status.

The two address units are nearly identical, and together they can perform two memory operations per cycle. Each memory operation is a load or a store that can be totally independent of the data-unit operation. The address units add an immediate or register index to an address register to form the address. The result of the address computation can optionally modify the address register to facilitate stepping through a memory array.

Like the ALU data path, the two address units support conditional

#### The Advanced DSPs



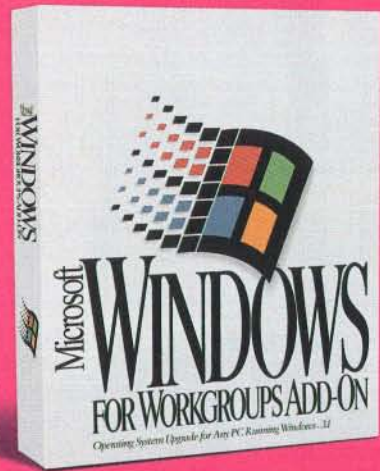
Like other DSPs, those integrated with the MVP are built to support multiple data accesses in a single cycle and to optimize the performance of the multiply-accumulate operations that characterize signal-processing algorithms. In addition, the ADSPs also support bit-field and pixel operations, making them powerful imaging and graphics processors as well.



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operations. The source for a store can choose between a pair of registers, and the decision whether or not to load a register can be based on status. The source or destination of a store or a load can be any of the 44 registers. A conditional load of the PC performs a conditional jump, which can free up the ALU data path to perform other operations.

Either or both address units can be used to perform a data operation in place of a memory transfer. In such a case, the result of the address data path is written to the destination register instead of data being fetched from memory. This capability, along with conditional loads of the PC, speeds up functions that are computationally bound or jump-bound rather than memory-access-limited.

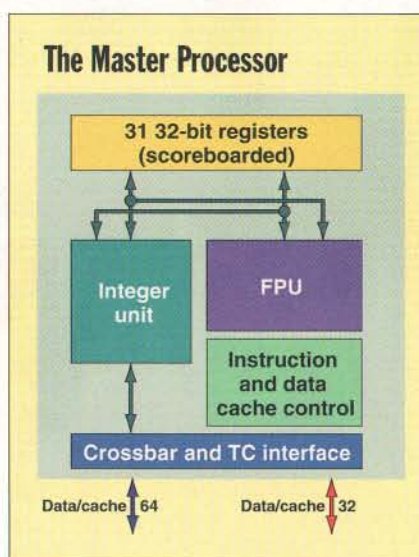
Three zero-overhead loop controllers are included in each ADSP. Because each ADSP instruction can do so much in parallel, key loops often require very few instructions. Having three loop controllers even allows for nested loops to have zero loop-control overhead.

Each loop controller has a set of registers that specifies the starting address, ending address, current loop count, and the initial count (for nested looping). Once the loop-control registers are initialized, loop counting and branching are performed with zero overhead in terms of execution time. The loop controllers can be used to perform zero-overhead branches to a run-time patch in code segments. Because the loop-control registers sit in the register file, you can write computational results to a loop-count register to specify whether or not a branch is taken based on a zero result.

Instruction prefetch and the instruction cache are controlled from within each ADSP. Instructions are executed in a three-cycle pipeline, with a new instruction starting every cycle, assuming that no stalling condition has occurred. The ADSPs' instruction controllers support interrupts and emulation control. If a cache miss occurs, the cache controller will make a packet request to the TC (Transfer Controller; described later) to get the new cache sub-block transferred.

### Beyond DSP

In addition to signal processing and bit-level manipulations, multimedia processing requires many other types of operations, such as 3-D graphics and audio processing. These applications often require high-precision floating-point computations. Because a single FPU was all that could fit on the MVP's die, floating-point capability was not incorporated into the ADSPs but built into a separate pro-



The MP consists of both an integer unit and an FPU. Control of the instruction and data caches is integrated into the processor, although the cache memory resides in the SRAM array.

cessor called the Master Processor, or MP (see the figure "The Master Processor"). The FPU contains a special set of instructions to support 3-D graphics transforms and DSP-like floating-point operations.

The MP is a general-purpose RISC processor that is programmable generally in high-level languages. It performs opera-

store with automatic increment addressing every cycle.

The register file contains 31 32-bit registers that are common to both the integer unit and the FPU. The registers are scoreboarded for floating-point results and memory-load operations. The scoreboard allows the MP to continue execution; the MP will stall only if an instruction tries to use a register before the prior operation has loaded its result. As with some other RISC architectures, R0 is a dummy register that is always read as zero.

Instruction flow and cache management are controlled within the MP. A three-stage pipeline starts a new instruction every cycle, assuming no stalling conditions have occurred. The instruction controller also deals with interrupts and emulation support. The MP has hardware for managing the 4-KB data and 4-KB instruction caches. When a cache miss occurs, the MP's cache controller automatically makes a packet request to the TC to get the necessary data transferred.

### Communications Matters

The final important consideration in designing the MVP was the need for high data bandwidth for off-chip communications and interprocessor communication. This requirement is common to signal pro-

CPU	DSP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generalized functions</li> <li>Single data bus</li> <li>Hardware cache control</li> <li>Generalized addressing</li> <li>Hardware manages microarchitecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signal processing</li> <li>Multiple data buses</li> <li>Programmer-accessible caches</li> <li>Loop-optimized addressing</li> <li>Programmer manages microarchitecture</li> </ul>

tions requiring a higher level of precision than is available from the ADSPs.

The MP integer unit has a 32-bit instruction word that performs integer register-to-register or load/store instructions nominally in one cycle. The basic load or store operation adds an index to a register containing the base address to form the memory address. To step an address pointer through memory, the instruction can optionally update the register that's used as the base-address register with the result of the add.

The IEEE-754 FPU is pipelined and runs in parallel with the integer unit. In normal operation, a new floating-point add or multiply can be initiated every cycle. A special set of parallel floating-point operations can initiate a multiply, an addition or subtraction, and a 64-bit load or

processing, floating-point processing, and graphics processing. Much of the early architecture definition focused on achieving high bandwidth, making sure that the processors wouldn't have to wait on data, and ensuring that interprocessor communication would not be a bottleneck.

To address internal communications issues, we incorporated 25 small, 64-bit-wide RAMs on the MVP chip. These are accessed by the processors through a crossbar interconnection. To handle external communications, we incorporated on-chip an intelligent DMA controller for handling block data movement: the TC (Transfer Controller), mentioned earlier.

The 50 KB of on-chip memory is physically separated into 25 2-KB RAMs. 18 KB of this memory (nine 2-KB blocks) is dedicated to specific functions. Every



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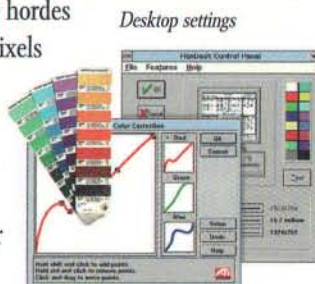
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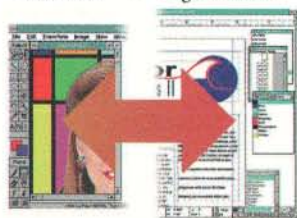
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Winbench 4.0 <sup>†</sup> 1024 x 768 (256 colors) refresh/sec	42.5	35.5	23.9
Winbench 4.0 <sup>†</sup> 1024 x 1024 (16.7M colors) refresh/sec	26.0	14.9	5.6
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ADSP uses one 2-KB block as a hardware-managed instruction cache that is loaded by the TC in the event of a cache miss. The MP uses two 2-KB blocks as an instruction cache and two more as a data cache. Finally, one 2-KB block is reserved as fast RAM and is accessible only by the MP and TC.

The remaining 32 KB of RAM is shared and can be accessed in chunks of 8, 16, 32, or 64 bits at a time; the large number of individual RAMs supports many parallel accesses. A crossbar-switch network lets the following accesses to shared RAM occur simultaneously: two 32-bit accesses by each ADSP, a 64-bit access by the MP, and a 64-bit access by the TC.

Crossbar-switch connections are determined by the most significant bits of each address on a cycle-by-cycle basis. If more than one access is requested of the same RAM block in a cycle, round-robin-prioritization hardware determines which processor is allowed access and which processor is stalled until the next cycle.

All the shared RAMs and the one MP/TC 2-KB RAM block reside at fixed addresses and are managed by software. Generally, the processors send packet-request commands to the TC to load data before it is needed for processing and to store results after processing. Because of the number of individual RAMs available, these packet transfers can be set up so that they do not conflict with other accesses and therefore work fully in parallel with other processing.

Crossbar-shared memory is the most generally flexible multiprocessor memory architecture because it puts the fewest restrictions on how data must be organized. While the crossbar involves nearly 1000 data and address lines that must be connected between the processors and memory, it becomes practical to use because everything is integrated on one chip. The crossbar's flexibility translates into better efficiency, in terms of both execution speed and ease of programming.

### The Transfer Controller

The transfer controller is a very intelligent DMA controller that can autonomously transfer packets of data between the MVP and external memory (see the figure "The Transfer Controller"). The TC can address memory as either a linear or a multidimensional array of data or even as a complex shape, such as a polygon. The TC is byte-addressable and will automatically handle byte misalignment between the source and the destination. Requests for packet transfers can be made by any of the processors under program control, as well as by the cache controllers and the video controller for display refresh. Transfers can also be initiated by external requests.

The TC processes the source and destination addressing with independent controllers. The burst FIFO (first-in/first-out) supports DRAM page and burst modes and buffers byte-misaligned accesses to more efficiently move data. A separate cache-access controller can break into the middle of program-controlled packet transfers to service cache misses. The request-prioritization/control logic prioritizes the many potentially active requests and starts transfers. The TC will automatically

suspend and later resume lower-priority requests when a higher-priority request occurs.

The external memory interface provides support for ROMs, SRAMs, DRAMs, and

VRAMs (video RAMs). The support for DRAMs, including timing control and address multiplexing, is relatively new in DSPs. The combination of fast on-chip SRAM and an external DRAM interface supports high performance while also reducing system costs.

The TC is capable of transferring data between sources and destinations that have different dimensions. In graphics and imaging, for example, it is common for the TC to fetch data from an image region as a 2-D array and

bring it on-chip for processing as a linear array. After processing, the results stored in a linear array can then be stored off-chip as an  $x,y$  array. The ability of the TC to make these transformations autonomously greatly improves the efficiency of processing by the ADSPs and the MP.

The MVP chip has two sets of video-timing counters and registers. The video controller keeps track of horizontal and vertical synchronization and blanking timing, as well as supporting a 2-D border region. Each counter has its own asynchronous clock input and has a set of synchronization, blanking, and border signals. The synchronization signals can be individually set up as outputs (for display) or inputs (for video capture). An SRT (shift-register transfer controller) has comparators that cause shift-register transfer cycles for VRAMs or cause packet transfers for DRAM base-display memory.

### Support Issues

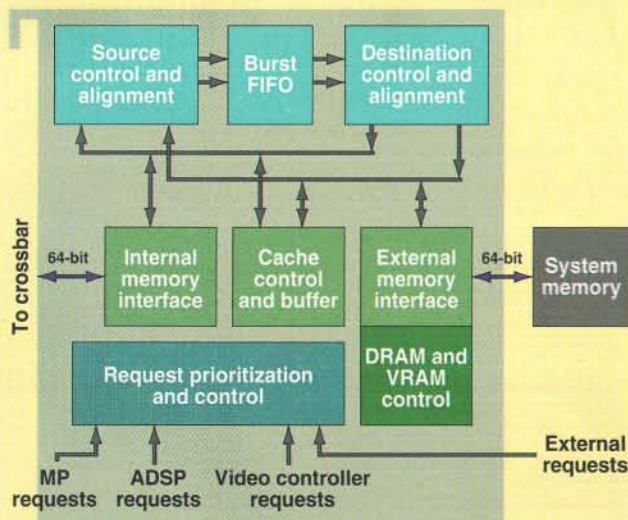
Although perhaps not as exciting as the microarchitecture, testability and software debugging were important concerns in the MVP design, and roughly 10 percent of the chip's nonmemory transistors are dedicated to these functions. All storage nodes can be scanned in or out to support boundary-scanned testing. Other features in the scan path support emulation loading and the dumping of the internal state of the MVP. Address comparators were also added to support real breakpoints.

A complete suite of software support has been developed for the MVP chip. Assemblers and C compilers have been

### TARGET APPLICATIONS

Videoconferencing  
Document image processing  
X Window System terminals  
Imaging  
3-D graphics  
Compression  
Cellular base stations  
Virtual reality  
Video servers  
Neural networks

### The Transfer Controller



In addition to controlling the movement of data and instructions on- and off-chip, the TC performs transformations where data is processed in an order different from that in which it is stored. The TC also contains a DRAM and VRAM controller.



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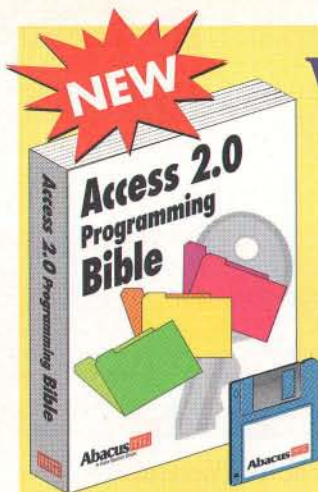
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developed for the MP and the ADSPs. A C-like algebraic assembler for the ADSPs supports the many different operations that they can perform. Software-simulation and hardware-emulation tools that use the same graphical interface are available. An imaging and graphics software library is also currently being developed. An MP-resident executive supports multitasking and intertask synchronization and communications. Under the executive, tasks running on the MP issue commands that are carried out by the ADSPs.

## Putting It All Together

Through the use of parallel processing, the MVP puts a new level of programmability and performance on a single IC. Not only does the MVP integrate five processors on a single chip, but each processor can execute many operations in parallel. The MVP is implemented on a 342mm<sup>2</sup> die, using a 0.6-micron, three-metal-layer process. It uses a 3.3-V power supply and will initially run at 40 MHz, with 50-MHz parts due next year. The MVP is packaged in a ceramic pin-grid array, but it will eventually move to a composite metal-plastic package. It draws 7.5 W at 50 MHz.

The MVP is capable of performing the equivalent of over 2 billion RISC-like operations per second. In specific applications, a single MVP can do the job of over 10 of the most powerful DSPs or general-purpose processors previously available. The MVP can move 2.4 GB of data and 1.8 GB of instructions within the chip—plus shuffle 400 MB of data to off-chip memory—per second.

Some of the obvious uses for the MVP chip will be multimedia applications, such as videoconferencing; document-image processing, from digital copiers to real-time OCR; 2-D and 3-D graphics; audio enhancement and compression; telecommunications; and virtual reality. But the real virtue of the MVP is that its combination of programmability and performance will undoubtedly lead to applications that are as yet unimagined. ■

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*I wish to thank all the people who made the MVP a reality, especially co-architects Bob Gove, Nick Ing-Simmons, Keith Balmer, and program manager Walt Bonneau. The development of the MVP was a worldwide TI project, involving TI employees in Houston; Dallas; Bedford, England; and Bangalore, India.*

*Karl M. Gutttag is a TI Fellow and chief architect of the MVP chip. You can contact him on the Internet at [karl@video.sc.ti.com](mailto:karl@video.sc.ti.com) or on BIX c/o "editors."*





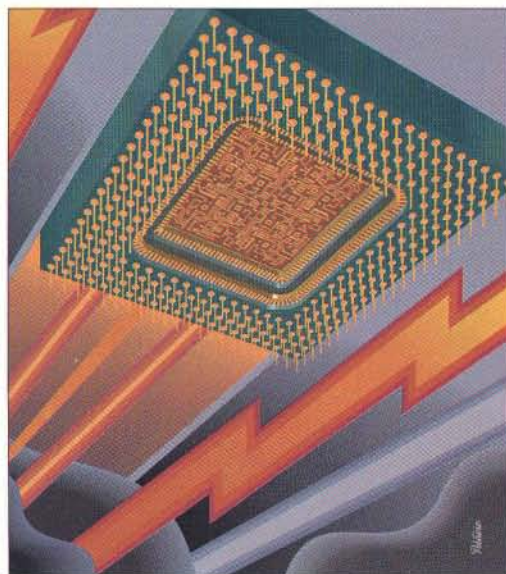
# 1994 Readers' Choice Awards

**B**YTE readers are an eclectic and savvy bunch, and this is reflected in the results of the 1994 Readers' Choice Awards. In most cases, familiar favorites dominate the product categories: You still like Gateway PCs, IBM workstations, and Microsoft word processors. Aldus and Adobe remain top guns in graphics software, which bodes well for Adobe's recent acquisition of Aldus. And the seesaw battle for the top spot in the notebook category actually produced a tie this year, with perennial contenders Apple (with its Mac PowerBooks) and IBM (with its ThinkPads) sharing the honors.

The most incongruous result showed up in the voting for Software Product of the Year. IBM's OS/2 took top honors, despite the fact that Windows was voted the best operating system/environment. What looks like a contradiction at first glance could simply be your way of recognizing the superior technology of OS/2 2.x while still acknowledging the practical importance of Windows.

Hardware Product of the Year voting also featured a battle of rivals: Intel and its Pentium versus IBM/Motorola and the PowerPC. The Pentium won by a comfortable margin, but the voting results serve notice of your growing awareness of, and interest in, the RISC-based PowerPC architecture. It will be interesting to see how you rate these rivals in future years.

The BYTE Readers' Choice Awards are the result of a random sampling of BYTE subscribers conducted in conjunction with the February '94 issue. Because they come from you, these awards better reflect a product's performance and acceptance in the real world than can any review or editors' award.



## **HARDWARE PRODUCT OF THE YEAR** **Pentium,**

*Intel*

RUNNERS-UP:

**PowerPC 601,**  
*IBM/Motorola*

**ThinkPad 750c,**  
*IBM*

**DESKTOP COMPUTER—PC**  
**GATEWAY 4DX2-66V,**  
*Gateway 2000*

RUNNERS-UP:

**GATEWAY P5-60,**  
**GATEWAY 4DX2-66,**  
*Gateway 2000*

**DESKTOP COMPUTER—**  
**MACINTOSH**

**APPLE MACINTOSH**  
**QUADRA 950,**  
*Apple Computer*

RUNNERS-UP:  
**QUADRA 650,**  
**QUADRA 610,**  
*Apple Computer*

**WORKSTATION**

**IBM RS/6000 SERIES,**  
*IBM*

RUNNERS-UP:  
**HP 9000 SERIES,**  
*Hewlett-Packard*

**SUN SPARCSTATION**  
**10,**  
*Sun Microsystems*

**LAPTOP/NOTEBOOK**  
**COMPUTER**

**TIE: IBM THINKPAD**  
**SERIES,**  
*IBM*

**MACINTOSH**  
**POWERBOOK SERIES,**  
*Apple Computer*

RUNNER-UP:  
**TRAVELMATE,**  
*Texas Instruments*

**HAND-HELD COMPUTER**  
**MESSAGEPAD,**  
*Apple Computer*

RUNNERS-UP:  
**GATEWAY**  
**HANDBOOK,**  
*Gateway 2000*

**HP LX SERIES,**  
*Hewlett-Packard*



## Feature

### MONITOR

**NEC MULTISYNC FG SERIES,**  
*NEC Technologies*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**VIEWSONIC 17,**  
*ViewSonic*

**APPLE RGB,**  
*Apple Computer*

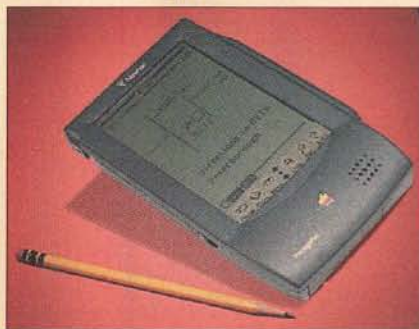
### LASER PRINTER

**LASERJET 4M,**  
*Hewlett-Packard*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**LASERJET IIIP,**  
**LASERJET IIISI,**  
*Hewlett-Packard*



IBM RS/6000 PowerStation 25T



Apple MessagePad

### MODEM

**PRACTICAL MODEM PM9600SA,**  
*Practical Peripherals*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**SPORTSTER,**  
*U.S. Robotics*

**PROMODEM ULTIMA,**  
*Prometheus*

### VIDEO BOARD—PC

**DIAMOND VIPER,**  
*Diamond Computer Systems*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**ATI ULTRA PRO,**  
*ATI Technologies*

**PARADISE WD24,**  
*Western Digital*

### VIDEO BOARD—MACINTOSH

**THUNDER 24,**  
*SuperMac Technology*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**PRECISION COLOR 24X,**  
*Radius*

**PAINTBOARD XL,**  
*RasterOps*



HP LaserJet 4M

## SOFTWARE PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

### IBM OS/2 2.x,

*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**

**Word for Windows,**  
*Microsoft*

**WordPerfect for Windows,**  
*WordPerfect*

### WORD PROCESSOR—PC PLATFORM

**WORD FOR WINDOWS,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**AMI PRO,**  
*Lotus Development*

**WORDPERFECT FOR WINDOWS,**  
*WordPerfect*

### WORD PROCESSOR—MACINTOSH

**WORD FOR MACINTOSH,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**WORDPERFECT,**  
*WordPerfect*

**MACWRITE PRO,**  
*Clarisc*

### CAD PROGRAM—PC PLATFORM

**AUTOCAD,**  
*Autodesk*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**GENERIC CADD,**  
*Autodesk*

**MICROSTATION,**  
*Intergraph*

### CAD PROGRAM—MACINTOSH

**CLARIS CAD,**  
*Clarisc*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**DESIGNCAD MACINTOSH,**  
*American Small Business Computers*

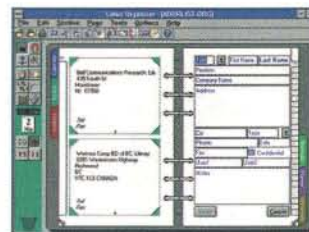
**VELLUM,**  
*Ashlar*

### CONTACT MANAGER/PIM—ALL PLATFORMS

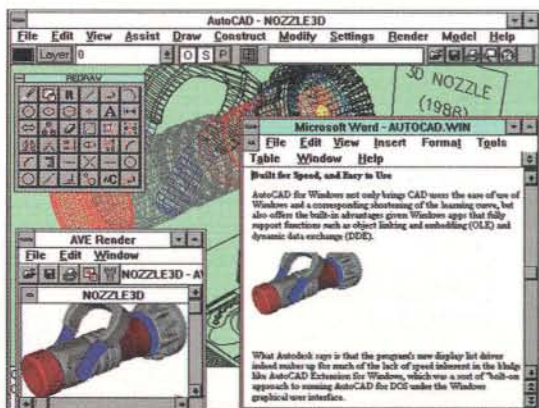
**LOTUS ORGANIZER,**  
*Lotus Development*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**ACT,**  
*Symantec*

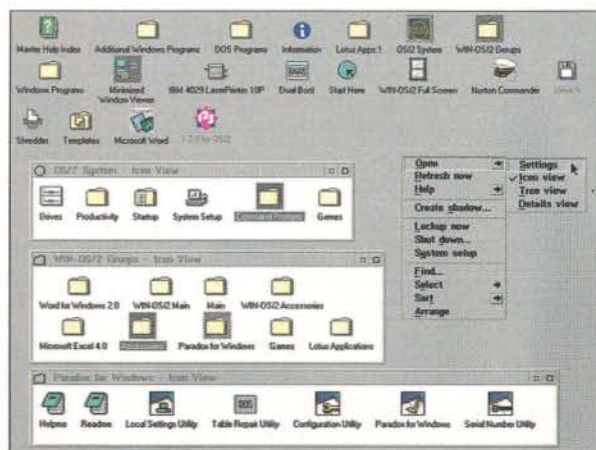
**PACKRAT,**  
*Polaris Software*



Lotus Organizer 1.0



AutoCAD

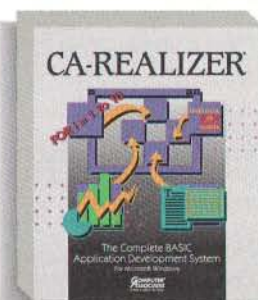


OS/2 2.1



# A Better Basic.

## New CA-REALIZER® 2.0 Beats Visual Basic 3.0.



Compared to Visual Basic 3.0, CA-REALIZER® 2.0 is half the cost and twice the product.

CA-REALIZER is already the easiest, most powerful BASIC for Windows and OS/2, and with version 2.0 it's even better. No one can match our combination of features, ease of use, and price. No one can make it easier to port your applications from QuickBASIC, and no one can make it

more fun to develop for Windows and OS/2.

CA-REALIZER also comes with a huge array of powerful, plug-and-play tools like spreadsheets, charts, text editors, animation,

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application and distribute it royalty-free with the run-time module that's included. And you can generate an installation disk with the push of a button.

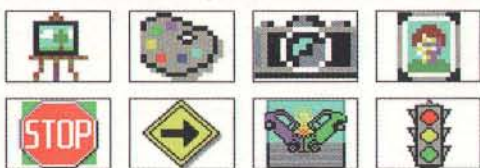
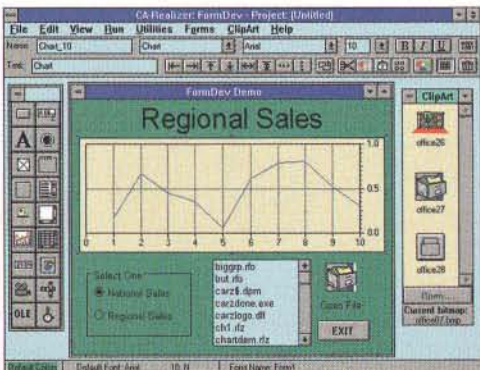
*PC Computing* said, "No other Windows BASIC can match it for power and breadth of features."

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PageMaker 5.0

**DATABASE MANAGER—  
PC PLATFORM**

**PARADOX,**  
*Borland International*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**ACCESS,**  
*Microsoft*

**FOXPRO,**  
*Microsoft*

**DATABASE MANAGER—  
MACINTOSH**

**FILEMAKER PRO,**  
*Claris*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**4TH DIMENSION,**  
*ACI US*

**OMNIS,**  
*Blyth Software*

**DATABASE  
CLIENT/SERVER—ALL  
PLATFORMS**

**NOVELL NETWORK  
SQL,**  
*Novell*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**SQL SERVER,**  
*Microsoft/Sybase*

**ORACLE SERVER,**  
*Oracle*

**DESKTOP PUBLISHING  
PROGRAM—PC PLATFORM**

**PAGEMAKER,**  
*Aldus*

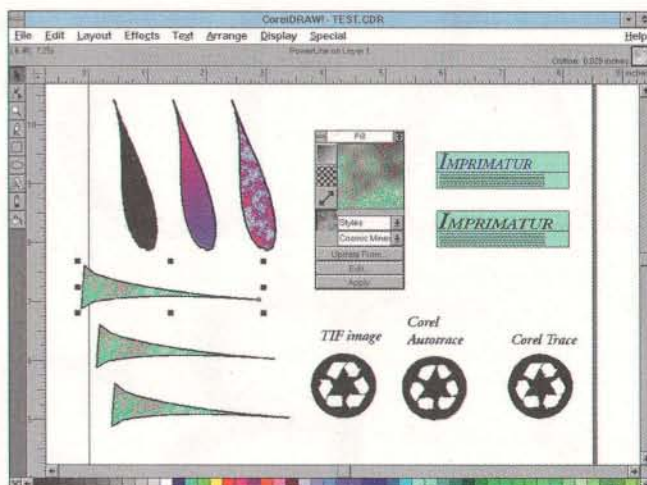
**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**PUBLISHER,**  
*Microsoft*

**VENTURA PUBLISHER  
FOR WINDOWS,**  
*Corel*

**DESKTOP PUBLISHING  
PROGRAM—MACINTOSH**

**PAGEMAKER,**  
*Aldus*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**QUARKXPRESS,**  
*Quark*



CorelDraw 4.0

**VENTURA PUBLISHER,**  
*Corel*

**DESKTOP PUBLISHING  
PROGRAM—UNIX**

**FRAMEMAKER,**  
*Frame Technology*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**INTERLEAF,**  
*Interleaf*

**ISLAND  
WRITE/PAINT/DRAW,**  
*Island Graphics*

**E-MAIL/WORKGROUP  
SOFTWARE—PC PLATFORM**

**MICROSOFT MAIL,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**CC:MAIL,**  
**LOTUS NOTES,**  
*Lotus Development*

**E-MAIL/WORKGROUP  
SOFTWARE—MACINTOSH**

**MICROSOFT MAIL,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**CC:MAIL,**  
*Lotus Development*

**QUICKMAIL,**  
*CE Software*

**GRAPHICS PROGRAM—  
PC PLATFORM**

**CORELDRAW,**  
*Corel*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR,**  
*Adobe*

**3D STUDIO,**  
*Autodesk*

**GRAPHICS PROGRAM—  
MACINTOSH**

**ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR,**  
*Adobe*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**MACDRAW PRO,**  
*Claris*

**FREEHAND,**  
*Aldus*

**NETWORK OPERATING  
SYSTEM—PC PLATFORM**

**NETWARE,**  
*Novell*

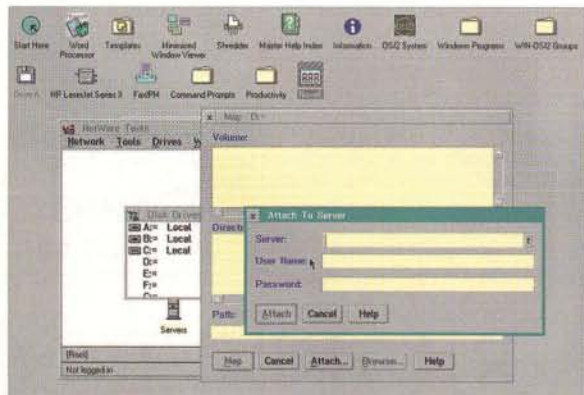
**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**WINDOWS FOR  
WORKGROUPS,**  
*Microsoft*

**LANTASTIC,**  
*Artisoft*

**NETWORK OPERATING  
SYSTEM—MACINTOSH**

**NETWARE FOR  
MACINTOSH,**  
*Novell*

**RUNNER-UP:**  
**APPLESHARE,**  
*Apple Computer*



Novell NetWare 4.0





## Announcing the latest breakthrough in high-performance notebook computers—the TravelMate 4000E WinDX4™/75.



The new TI TravelMate 4000E WinDX4/75MHz notebook. With its IntelDX4 processor, you have the power to be more productive.

At Texas Instruments, we've listened to your needs. That's why we've created a way for you to work faster and increase your productivity — with the new TravelMate WinDX4/75 active matrix color notebook computers.

You'll find a lightning-fast 75MHz IntelDX4 processor inside. Combined with our innovative system architecture, your new TravelMate will scream with speed. And with 3 to 5 hours of battery life and a 455MB hard drive, you can be more productive even when you're on the go.

Finally, with so many high-performance features packed in, who needs a desktop PC? The TravelMate 4000E WinDX4/75 does it all. To learn where you can reserve yours today, simply call **1-800-TI-TEXAS** (1-800-848-3927), after all, they're going fast.

### TRAVELMATE 4000E SERIES NOTEBOOKS

DISPLAY	PROCESSOR	MEMORY†
Active Matrix Color (9.5")	IntelDX4-75MHz	4MB RAM/455MB HDD
Active Matrix Color	IntelDX4-75MHz	4MB RAM/340MB HDD
Active Matrix Color	486DX2-50MHz	4MB RAM/200MB HDD
Dual Scan Color	486DX2-50MHz	4MB RAM/200MB HDD
Color	486DX2-40MHz	4MB RAM/200MB HDD
Color	486SX-25MHz	4MB RAM/120MB HDD
Monochrome	486DX2-50MHz	4MB RAM/200MB HDD
Monochrome	486SX-25MHz	4MB RAM/120MB HDD

### TRAVELMATE INTELLIGENT DOCKING SYSTEM

COMPATIBILITY	EXPANSION	INTERFACES
TI TM4000E Series Notebooks	Six 16-bit ISA slots, two PCMCIA Type III slots, four drive bays	Parallel/2 Serial, VGA, Mouse, keyboard, game port and RJ-11 jack

† RAM expandable to 20MB with optional memory.

TravelMate, WinDX4, and "Extending Your Reach With Innovation" are trademarks of Texas Instruments. Intel DX4 is a trademark and the Intel Inside logo is a registered trademark of Intel Corp. © 1994 TI.

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## Feature

### PRESENTATION GRAPHICS—PC PLATFORM

**LOTUS FREELANCE GRAPHICS,**  
*Lotus Development*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**POWERPOINT,**  
*Microsoft*

**SPC HARVARD GRAPHICS,**  
*Software Publishing*

### PRESENTATION GRAPHICS—MACINTOSH

**PERSUASION,**  
*Aldus*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**POWERPOINT,**  
*Microsoft*

**CA-CRICKET PRESENTS,**  
*Computer Associates International*

### OPERATING SYSTEM/ENVIRONMENT—ALL PLATFORMS

**MICROSOFT WINDOWS,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**OS/2 2.x,**  
*IBM*  
**MS-DOS,**  
*Microsoft*

### PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE—PC PLATFORM

**BORLAND C++,**  
*Borland International*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**VISUAL BASIC,**  
*Microsoft*

**VISUAL C++,**  
*Microsoft*

### PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE—MACINTOSH

**SYMANTEC C++,**  
*Symantec*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**HYPERCARD,**  
*Apple Computer*

**THINK C,**  
*Symantec*

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT—ALL PLATFORMS

**MICROSOFT PROJECT FOR WINDOWS,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**HARVARD PROJECT MANAGER,**  
*Software Publishing*

**CA-SUPERPROJECT,**  
*Computer Associates International*

### SPREADSHEET—PC PLATFORM

**MICROSOFT EXCEL,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**QUATTRO PRO FOR WINDOWS,**  
*Borland International*

**1-2-3 FOR WINDOWS,**  
*Lotus Development*

### SPREADSHEET—MAC PLATFORM

**MICROSOFT EXCEL,**  
*Microsoft*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**1-2-3 FOR MACINTOSH,**  
*Lotus Development*

**WINGZ,**  
*Informix Software*

### UTILITY PACKAGE—PC PLATFORM

**NORTON UTILITIES,**  
*Symantec*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**PC TOOLS DELUXE,**  
*Central Point Software*

**NORTON DESKTOP FOR WINDOWS,**  
*Symantec*

### UTILITY PACKAGE—MACINTOSH

**NORTON UTILITIES MAC,**  
*Symantec*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
**MAC TOOLS DELUXE,**  
*Central Point Software*

**SUM II,**  
*Symantec*

### BEST SERVICE—HARDWARE

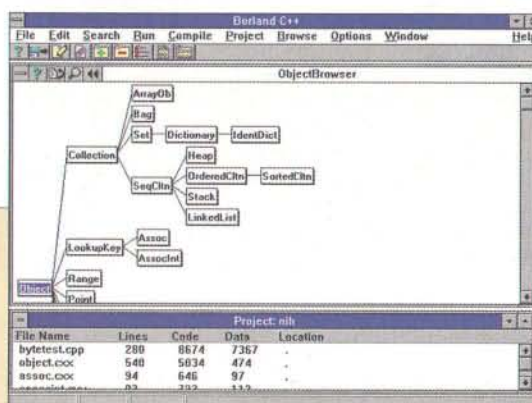
*Gateway 2000*

**RUNNERS-UP:**  
*IBM*  
*Hewlett-Packard*

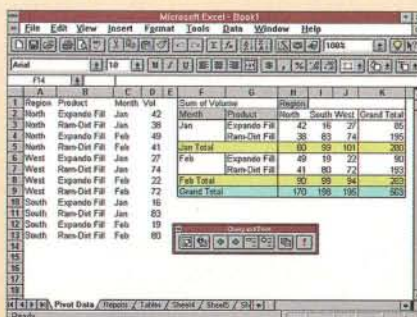
### BEST SERVICE—SOFTWARE

*Microsoft*

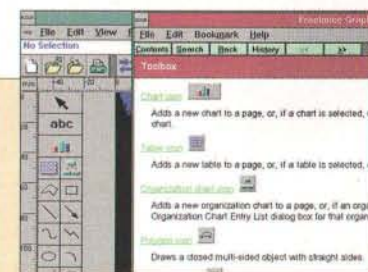
**RUNNERS-UP:**  
*WordPerfect*  
*Borland International*



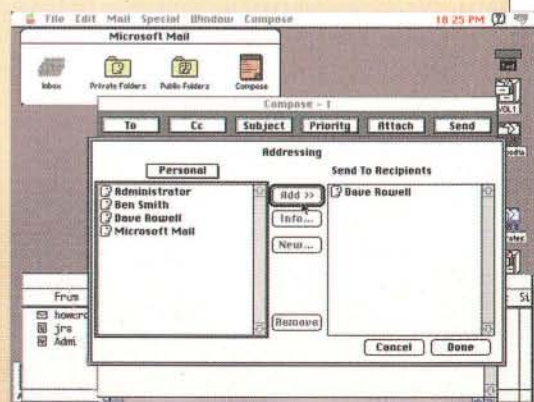
*Borland C++ 3.1*



*Microsoft Excel 5.0 for Windows*



*Lotus Freelance Graphics*



*Microsoft Mail*



When protecting your software against piracy and unauthorized use, make sure that your protection system has all the following qualities:

A GOOD HARDWARE KEY

Hardware-based software protection systems are now the standard worldwide. However, not all keys are the same. A good key should have all the following features:

- ✓ Compatibility and transparency. The key should work without any problem on your customers' computers. The user should be able to forget the key after connecting it.
- ✓ Unbreakable electronics. A customized ASIC (Application Specific Integrated Circuit) component integrated into the key to prevent reverse engineering and make cracking the hardware virtually impossible.
- ✓ A unique and inaccessible developer's code burnt into the ASIC. This

code should never be held in the key's memory, where it can be read and altered.

- ✓ A Read/Write Memory inside the key should be available. The memory should be writable in the field, on any PC, without any special programming equipment.
- ✓ Very low power consumption, enabling the key to work even under the most adverse power conditions, on PCs and laptops, with or without a printer.



POWERFUL SOFTWARE

- ✓ A Linkable Protection Module with which calls can be made to the key from any point in the protected program.
- ✓ An "Envelope" encryption program. Such programs enhance security while making it possible to protect a software application even without its source code.
- ✓ Sophisticated antidebugging and encryption mechanisms.

# HASP® - The Professional Software Protection System



MacHASP - The Professional Software Protection System for the Macintosh

HASP® OFFERS YOU ALL THESE FEATURES AND MORE:

HASP was designed by a team of computer experts, professional cryptologists, and electrical engineers. As a result, HASP keys are supported by what is probably the best software in the market, and the HASP system has worked on every computer it has been tried on. In addition to all the features mentioned above, HASP provides:

- ✓ A Full Authorization System for protecting dozens of programs using only one key.
- ✓ A Pattern Code Security System (PCS) which enables parallel processing of multiple calls by the Linkable Protection Module.
- ✓ A Virus Detection option that can be incorporated in the protected program to check whether it has been infected by a virus.
- ✓ Several HASP keys can be connected one behind the other. Small physical size ensures maximum convenience for your customers.

NETHASP- THE ULTIMATE SOFTWARE PROTECTION FOR NETWORKS

✓ Only one NetHASP key is needed to run a protected program from any station in a network. NetHASP provides full support for protecting DOS and WINDOWS software under network environments, including Novell dedicated & non-dedicated servers, Lan Manager, Lantastic, Banyan, DLink, and NET-BIOS based LANs.

LISTEN TO THE EXPERTS:

In all the products we tested, except the HASP, we could see through the encrypting and questioning procedures... and crack them.

**CT Magazine (Germany)**  
**MemoHASP:** ...of all the protection devices tested is without any doubt, the one which combines the best features.

**PCCompatible (Spain)**  
Trying to crack a program... that was protected utilizing all of HASP's features - is like searching for the Holy Grail.

**Micro Systems (France)**  
PC dongles... come with varying claims as to their transparency. The majority suffer from problems when a printer is connected... the DESkey and HASP-3 are not affected...

**Program Now (Britain)**  
Of all keys tested, HASP is the most ambitious one... the quality of HASP manufacturing seems excellent.

**PC Compatible (France)**  
An easy to use software protection system for the Macintosh, which ensures an effective defense against software piracy... Life is difficult for pirates... MacHASP is an optimal protection method, for the programmers... and for the users...

**Bit Magazine (Italy)**

OPERATING ENVIRONMENTS

- PC:** DOS, Windows, Windows-NT, Win 32s, OS/2, SCO Unix, SCO Xenix, Interactive Unix, AIX, Autocad, DOS Extenders, LANs
- MAC:** MAC, PowerMAC (ADB port)
- NEC:** DOS, Windows
- AMIGA**

AND THE BOTTOM LINE:

We offer some of the most competitive prices in the market. Since 1984, HASP has enabled thousands of software producers in more than 60 countries, including several Fortune 500 companies, to protect their software.

Call now for your HASP evaluation kit.

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Denmark	SC Metric 42 804200	Finland	ID-Systems 0 870 3520	Germany	CSS 201 7498640	Greece	Unibrain 1 6856320
Holland	Akkermans 45 241444	Italy	Partner Data 2 26147380	Japan	Athena, 3 58 213284	Korea	Dae-A 2 848 4481
New Zealand	Training, 4 5666014	Poland	System 61 475065	Portugal	Futurmatica 1 4116269	South Africa	D Le Roux, 11 886 4704
Spain	PC Hardware, 3 4493193	Switzerland	Opag 61 7112245	Taiwan	Teco 2-555 9676	Turkey	Mikrobeta 4-4677504

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Cupertino, CA 95014  
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(408) 252-4444  
fax: (408) 252-7765  
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**Adobe Systems, Inc.**

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1585 Charleston Rd.  
Mountain View, CA 94039  
(800) 833-6687  
(415) 961-4400  
fax: (415) 961-3769  
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411 First Ave. S  
Seattle, WA 98104  
(800) 333-2538  
(206) 622-5500  
fax: (206) 343-3360  
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**American Small Business Computers, Inc.**

1 American Way  
Plymouth, OK 74361  
(918) 825-4844  
fax: (918) 825-6359  
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**Apple Computer, Inc.**

1 Infinite Loop  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
(800) 776-2333  
(408) 996-1010  
fax: (408) 996-0275  
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**Artisoft, Inc.**

2202 North Forbes Blvd.  
Tucson, AZ 85745  
(800) 846-9726  
(602) 670-7100  
fax: (602) 670-7101  
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**Ashlar, Inc.**

1290 Oakmead Pkwy.,  
Suite 218  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086  
(800) 877-2745  
(408) 746-1800  
fax: (408) 746-0749  
**Circle 1066 on Inquiry Card.**

**ATI Technologies, Inc.**

33 Commerce Valley Dr. E  
Thornhill, Ontario, Canada L3T 7N6  
(905) 882-2600  
fax: (905) 882-2620  
**Circle 1067 on Inquiry Card.**

**Autodesk, Inc.**

2320 Marinship Way  
Sausalito, CA 94965  
(415) 332-2344  
fax: (415) 331-8093  
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**Blyth Software, Inc.**

989 East Hillsdale Blvd.,  
Suite 400  
Foster City, CA 94404  
(800) 346-6647  
(415) 571-0222  
fax: (415) 571-1132  
**Circle 1069 on Inquiry Card.**

**Borland International, Inc.**

100 Borland Way  
Scotts Valley, CA 95066  
(800) 682-9299  
(408) 431-1000  
fax: (408) 431-4122  
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**Central Point Software, Inc.**

15220 Northwest Greenbrier Pkwy.,  
Suite 150  
Beaverton, OR 97006  
(800) 964-6896  
(503) 690-8088  
fax: (503) 690-8083  
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**CE Software, Inc.**

P.O. Box 65580  
1801 Industrial Cir.  
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(800) 523-7638  
(515) 221-1801  
fax: (515) 221-1806  
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**Clarix Corp.**

P.O. Box 58168  
5201 Patrick Henry Dr.  
Santa Clara, CA 95052  
(800) 544-8554  
(408) 987-7000  
fax: (408) 987-7460  
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**Computer Associates International, Inc.**

1 Computer Associates Plaza  
Islandia, NY 11788  
(800) 225-5224  
(516) 342-5224  
fax: (516) 342-5734  
**Circle 1074 on Inquiry Card.**

**Corel Corp.**

1600 Carling Ave.  
The Corel Building  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Z 8R7  
(800) 772-6735  
(613) 728-8200  
fax: (613) 728-9790  
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**Diamond Computer Systems, Inc.**

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Sunnyvale, CA 94086  
(408) 736-2000  
fax: (408) 730-5750  
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**Frame Technology Corp.**

1010 Rincon Cir.  
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(408) 433-3311  
fax: (408) 433-1928  
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**Gateway 2000, Inc.**

610 Gateway Dr.  
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North Sioux City, SD 57049  
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(605) 232-2000  
fax: (605) 232-2023  
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**Hewlett-Packard Co.**

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Palo Alto, CA 94304  
(800) 752-0900  
(415) 857-1501  
fax: (800) 333-1917  
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**IBM Corp.**

Old Orchard Rd.  
Armonk, NY 10504  
(800) 426-3333  
(914) 765-1900  
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**Informix Software, Inc.**

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Menlo Park, CA 94025  
(800) 331-1763  
(415) 926-6300  
fax: (415) 926-6593  
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**Intel Corp.**

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2200 Mission College Blvd.  
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(800) 628-8686  
(408) 765-8080  
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**Intergraph Corp.**

Huntsville, AL 35894  
(800) 345-4856  
(205) 730-2000  
fax: (205) 730-2108  
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**Interleaf, Inc.**

9 Hillside Ave.  
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Waltham, MA 02154  
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fax: (617) 290-4943  
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**Island Graphics Corp.**

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San Rafael, CA 94903  
(800) 255-4499  
(415) 491-1000  
fax: (415) 491-0402  
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**Lotus Development Corp.**

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Cambridge, MA 02142  
(800) 343-5414  
(617) 577-8500  
fax: (617) 693-6060  
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**Microsoft Corp.**

1 Microsoft Way  
Redmond, WA 98052  
(800) 426-9400  
(206) 882-8080  
fax: (206) 936-7329  
**Circle 1143 on Inquiry Card.**

**Motorola, Inc.**

2900 South Diablo Way  
Tempe, AZ 85282  
(800) 759-1107  
(602) 438-3000  
**Circle 1144 on Inquiry Card.**

**NEC Technologies, Inc.**

1414 Massachusetts Ave.  
Boxborough, MA 01719  
(800) 632-4636  
(508) 264-8000  
fax: (508) 264-8673  
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**Novell, Inc.**

122 East 1700 South  
Provo, UT 84606  
(800) 453-1267  
(801) 429-7000  
fax: (801) 429-5155  
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**Oracle Corp.**

500 Oracle Pkwy.  
Redwood Shores, CA 94065  
(800) 562-0720  
(415) 506-7000  
fax: (415) 506-7200  
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**Polaris Software, Inc.**

15175 Innovation Dr.  
San Diego, CA 92128  
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(619) 592-7400  
fax: (619) 592-7430  
**Circle 1391 on Inquiry Card.**

**Practical Peripherals, Inc.**

375 Conejo Ridge Ave.  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91361  
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(805) 497-4774  
fax: (805) 374-7200  
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**Prometheus Products, Inc.**

9524 Southwest Tualatin  
Sherwood Rd.  
Tualatin, OR 97062  
(800) 477-3473  
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fax: (503) 691-1101  
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**Quark, Inc.**

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(303) 894-8888  
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**Radius, Inc.**

1710 Fortune Dr.  
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(800) 227-2795  
(408) 434-1010  
fax: (408) 954-1927  
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**RasterOps Corp.**

2500 Walsh Ave.  
Santa Clara, CA 95051  
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**Software Publishing Corp.**

3165 Kifer Rd.  
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(800) 336-8360  
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fax: (408) 980-0729  
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**Sun Microsystems, Inc.**

2550 Garcia Ave.  
Mountain View, CA 94043  
(800) 786-0404  
(415) 960-1300  
fax: (408) 942-0218  
**Circle 1398 on Inquiry Card.**

**SuperMac Technology, Inc.**

215 Moffett Park Dr.  
Sunnyvale, CA 94089  
(800) 334-3005  
(408) 541-6100  
fax: (408) 541-6150  
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**Sybase, Inc.**

6475 Christie Ave.  
Emeryville, CA 94608  
(800) 879-2273  
(510) 922-3500  
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**Symantec Corp.**

10201 Torre Ave.  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
(800) 441-7234  
(408) 253-9600  
fax: (503) 334-7400  
**Circle 1401 on Inquiry Card.**

**Texas Instruments, Inc.**

P.O. Box 655474  
Dallas, TX 75265  
(800) 848-3927  
(512) 794-5970  
fax: (512) 250-7329  
**Circle 1402 on Inquiry Card.**

**U.S. Robotics, Inc.**

8100 North McCormick Blvd.  
Skokie, IL 60076  
(800) 342-5877  
(708) 982-5010  
fax: (708) 982-5235  
**Circle 1403 on Inquiry Card.**

**ViewSonic, Inc.**

20480 East Business Pkwy.  
Walnut, CA 91789  
(800) 888-8583  
(909) 869-7976  
fax: (909) 468-3756  
**Circle 1404 on Inquiry Card.**

**Western Digital Corp.**

8105 Irvine Center Dr.  
Irvine, CA 92718  
(800) 832-4778  
(714) 932-5000  
fax: (714) 932-6498  
**Circle 1405 on Inquiry Card.**

**WordPerfect Corp.**

1555 North Technology Way  
Orem, UT 84057  
(800) 451-5151  
(801) 225-5000  
fax: (801) 228-5077  
**Circle 1406 on Inquiry Card.**



# “If I Only Had A Gateway!”





There I was, eating Mama's spaghetti, when Guido and the boys come over, 'Yo Bonanno! Your tower, it's a leanin'.

Mama-mia! What's a matta me! That's a last time I buy a kit from the Towers-R-Us catalog. Never get enough cement mix. So, I used my mother-in-law's linguine sauce as extra cement. Oh boy, I no like how that turned out. And that's a last time I tell the workers we eat only after the foundation is laid!



I guess they tried to tell me the soil was bad. I thought they said the 'royal' was bad. And they were right - that King Antonio waza pretty nasty.

If I had a Gateway 35-90, I coulda designed my own tower. And it woulda been magnifico! The best tower the world ever saw.

Looka me. I coulda done so much better. It's a too late for me and my tower. Don't you be offa plumb, and be sayin' like me, 'Gee, I wish I woulda had a Gateway.'



Bonanno Pisano was the chief engineer of the Tower of Pisa. Soft soil and only 10 feet of foundation caused the tower, started in 1174, to begin leaning almost immediately. Over the years all efforts to halt the leaning have been futile. Bonanno was not a Gateway user.





# "Gateway's Pentium Architecture Would've Set Me Straight"

...Bonanno Pisano, engineer, 1174

**"If I only had a Gateway!"** — the anguished, rueful cry of a non-Gateway user. The lesson: Don't leave the success of *your* landmark projects to an archaic system. Get a Gateway 2000® PC and you'll have the latest technology in a high-quality PC, built to stand the tests of time. You get straightforward service and support from Gateway's knowledgeable employees. And best of all ... no regrets coming back to haunt you!

## Gateway's Superstructures

Look at it from this angle. You just gotta have the most powerful PC architecture available today, right? But there's no way you want to pay skyscraper prices, true? Your solution? Gateway 2000's P5 systems! These Pentium™-based machines are designed to give you all-around monumental performance — they're some of the fastest PCs you can find today! Capice?

Based on Intel®'s Pentium processor, all P5 models include a PCI local bus and an enhanced PCI/IDE controller allowing your hard drive to transfer data *up to twice as fast* as non-enhanced IDE systems. Gateway's P5-60 and P5-66 models, and our three power-packed **90MHz** models (*starting at just \$2,995*), give you a value that towers over the competition!

Gateway's P5-90 machines use Intel's super 90MHz processor for foundation-shaking power. You get a rare combination of colossal power and performance, *and* a great price. Ah, magnifico! Just look at these features: performance-boosting 540MB hard drives, 8MB or 16MB RAM, double-speed CD-ROMs, high-end graphics controllers and your choice of application software. Two 90MHz systems also include 16-bit sound cards and Yamaha speakers. Go ahead and compare. You'll see that these value-packed PCs stand unmatched.

Get all the tools to create lasting impressions with any Gateway P5 system. *Mama mia* — starting from only \$2,495, our Pentium values are out of this world!

## Classic Attractions

Our 486 PCI machines are Gateway 2000 classics built on a solid foundation of performance and value. Our new **100MHz DX4** machine, priced at \$2,495, is based on the fastest 486 processor available! With the same PCI local bus as in our P5 line, all 486 PCs will give you a great power boost. They include 8MB RAM, 540MB hard drive and a double-speed CD-ROM drive. These 33MHz, 66MHz and 100MHz systems are all upgradable to Pentium technology so you can expand in the future.

## Portable Sidekick Special Offer!

A perfect sidekick for your Gateway desktop system is the HandBook® 486 portable PC. It's just like having an extension to your desktop system! Call about our special desktop/HandBook combo today, available only at the time of desktop purchase. Having all the information you rely on, everywhere you go, has never been so easy.

*Gateway's P5-90 and P5-90 Tower systems rise above the competition!*



8 0 0 - 8 4 6 - 2 0 5 8



# "A Gateway Portable



**Heading out on another worldly expedition?** Whether it's transcontinental or transatlantic, a Gateway portable PC puts you at the controls, steers you in the right direction and sends you flying!



## Flying Machines

How can you go wrong? You can't! A Gateway 2000® ColorBook is just what you need for high-in-the-sky performance.

A portable PC with the supersonic performance of a desktop is yours with the power-packed **DX4-75MHz** ColorBook. With a 75MHz processor, you'll never want to leave the ground without it. And look, over there! No, your eyes aren't deceiving you — that's a **10.3-inch, dual-scan screen**, now on *three* ColorBook models. You won't find a screen this big, this affordable, anywhere else. It blows the competition out of the water!

All ColorBook models are based on the Intel® SL Enhanced 486 DX2 or DX4 processor and have the power and memory to run all your Windows applications. Weighing in at less than 5.7 pounds, measuring 1.77-inches thin, these portables start at \$1,995 and include 120MB or 250MB hard drive, support for simultaneous video, built-in trackball,

Do you know the way to San Jose?  
New York 1938. I readied my  
\$900 airplane for the flight to  
California. Everyone has a hobby,  
right? Little did I know my obsession  
with refrigerator magnets would bring  
a dark cloud of humanity down upon me.  
I placed my collection of magnets all  
around me. Mr. Piggy on the throttle.  
The Morton Salt ad by the altimeter  
and my favorite, the Titanic, right by  
the compass — hundreds of magnets  
all over the cramped cockpit.  
As I took off into the wild blue  
yonder, did I hear someone say, 'hey,  
Douglas, you're going the wrong way.'  
No, they must've said, 'have a nice day.'  
I'd been flying awhile when I looked  
down and thought - I know they're called  
the Great Lakes, but this is ridiculous!  
Is this compass right? I whacked it  
a few times, some of my dashboard  
magnets fell on the floor.  
My compass went crazy  
until I put them back in  
place. Go figure. I  
continued on, 'hey, what  
was that? A whale in  
Lake Superior?  
Land greeted me after  
27 hours. Where's the  
sun, the beaches? I only  
see redheads and Lucky  
Charms!  
Damn those refrigerator  
magnets! Boy was the wife steamed.  
'Hello, honey?' Um... It'll be a little late  
for dinner. I wish I would've had a  
Gateway portable to keep me on course.





# Would've Steered Me The Right Way"

... Douglas "Wrong Way" Corrigan, aviator, 1938



Douglas Corrigan set out in 1938 to fly solo nonstop from New York to California. After taking off in fog, he misread his compass and began flying eastward out over the Atlantic Ocean. After 27 hours he landed in Dublin, Ireland, not aware of his mistake. Douglas was not a Gateway user.

two PCMCIA Type II or one Type III slots, 256 colors running in VGA mode, excellent battery life, and a great suspend/resume feature.

You'll know you're headed in the right direction for top-flight performance when you get a Gateway ColorBook.

## 4 GATEWAY2000 HANDBOOK® 486

### Take Flight!

It's so lightweight, you'll soar! So powerful, you'll be in awe! That's the HandBook 486 from Gateway 2000. Take flight with this compact little PC no matter where you go. Taking the world by storm with a footprint of just 9.75 inches by 5.9 inches, the HandBook 486 weighs in at (*are you sitting down?*) under three pounds! That's lighter than any Intel 486-based portable available today.

Still up in the air about the combination of portability and power? Head this way, because the HandBook 486 is a real PC and the only DX2 subnotebook found on any continent. No compromises here.

You'll get an IDE hard drive with up to 130MB, standard 4MB or 8MB RAM upgradable to 20MB,

a backlit VGA screen, 78-key keyboard, EZ Point™ integrated pointer, and that terrific suspend/resume feature.

Whether you're a world traveler or an urban commuter, the Gateway 2000 ColorBook and HandBook offer you all the perks you deserve. So don't pick up the phone and go the "wrong way." Call Gateway 2000 straight-away!



**GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."®

8 0 0 - 8 4 6 - 2 0 5 8



Ever have one of those days? I was eating my Eggs Benedict when the wife looked up and snarled, 'You're not going to hang out with those friends of yours today, are you?' What did she mean by that? These were guys in togas, they didn't have much to hide.

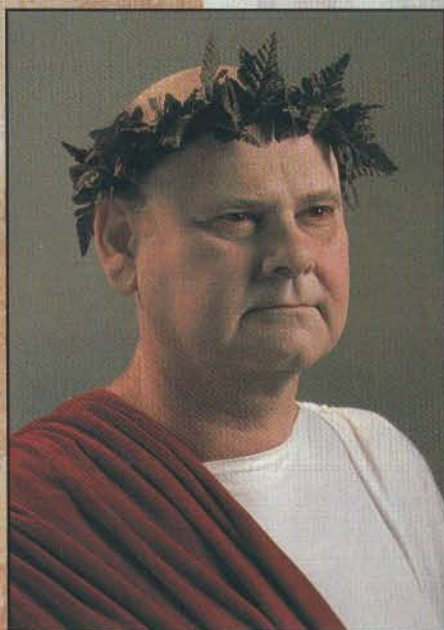
But even the oracle told me not to go to work, 'You shall regret the company you keep.' What did that mean? After years of running

amuck, conquering empires, and going on Roman holidays together, I felt I knew these guys.

After making a stop at the V and X cent store for eucalyptus lip balm, I continued on to the Senate house. Second mistake of the day. The first was getting out of bed.

Even as my last breath passed my lips, I wondered, 'WHY?' Death at the hands of my closest friends, then a salad and one of the hottest months of the year named after me. Hardly a fitting end for a man of my stature. Just goes to show no matter how much time you spend with guys in togas, you never really know them.

Man, I wish I would've had friends in the business.



## "If I Only



*Sometimes it's hard to know who to trust*, especially in the competitive PC arena. You'll find our honest, hard-working employees to be allies, supporting villages and empires alike — wherever Gateway 2000® computers are found. Our loyal customers have helped us to become a Fortune 500 company, but we're not resting on these laurels. Every Gateway 2000 employee is committed to our philosophy of providing customers with a quality product at an unbeatable value, along with the best service in the land. You have our word on it.

### Service Allies

As a Gateway 2000 customer, you receive toll-free technical support for the life of your system. And with the purchase of a Gateway modem you'll get Triton's CoSession™ Host at no additional charge. CoSession Host, a remote diagnostic software,



## PORTABLES

### HANDBOOK® 486

- Weight: 2.94 Lbs.
- Dimensions: 9.75" x 5.9" x 1.6"
- SL Enhanced Intel® 486 or DX2 Processor
- 4MB or 8MB RAM (expands to 20MB)
- 80 to 130MB IDE Hard Drive
- 7.9" Backlit VGA Display
- NiMH Battery & AC Pack
- Suspend/Resume Feature
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- EZ Point™ Integrated Pointer
- 78-Key Keyboard
- Parallel, Serial & PS/2® Ports
- MS Works for Windows™ 3.0
- MS-DOS® 6.2, WFW™ 3.11 & Serial Transfer Cable

#### HANDBOOK

##### 486SX-25

With 25MHz 486SX CPU, 4MB RAM and 80MB Hard Drive  
**\$1495**

#### HANDBOOK

##### 486SX-25

With 25MHz 486SX CPU, 4MB RAM and 130MB Hard Drive  
**\$1595**

#### HANDBOOK DX2-40

With 40MHz DX2 CPU, 8MB RAM, 130MB Hard Drive, Extra NiMH Battery and Leather Carrying Case  
**\$2295**

#### HANDBOOK 486SX-25

With 25MHz 486SX CPU, 8MB RAM, 130MB Hard Drive and Leather Carrying Case  
**\$1895**

### PORTABLE OPTIONS

Peripherals and upgrades available only with purchase of a system.

#### PCMCIA Cards:

- TelePath™ 14,400/14,400 fax/modem. **\$249**
- 9,600/2,400 fax/modem. **\$149**
- Ethernet adapter. **\$149**
- Token Ring adapter. **\$449**
- HandBook VGA adapter. **\$229**

#### Batteries:

- 2.2Ah NiMH batteries. **\$89**

#### Diskette Drive:

- HandBook external 1.44MB. **\$99**

#### Cases:

- ColorBook **\$49**, HandBook **\$55**

#### Extended VIP Warranty:

- We'll ship a replacement within 24 hours during warranty. Point of sale only. **\$100**

### COLORBOOK™

- Weight: Under 5.7 Lbs.
- Dimensions: 11.7" x 8.5" x 1.77"
- SL Enhanced Intel 486, DX2 or DX4 Processors
- 4MB or 8MB RAM (expands to 8, 12 or 20MB)
- 3.5" 1.44MB Diskette Drive

#### COLORBOOK 486SX-33

With 33MHz 486SX CPU, 4MB RAM, 120MB Hard Drive and 9.4" LCD  
**\$1995**

- Removable 120 to 250MB IDE Drive
- 10.3" or 9.4" VGA Dual-Scan STN Color Display
- NiMH Battery & AC Pack
- Suspend/Resume Feature
- 2 PCMCIA Type II or 1 Type III Slots

#### COLORBOOK DX2-40

With 40MHz DX2 CPU, 4MB RAM, 250MB Hard Drive and 10.3" LCD  
**\$2495**

- Integrated Trackball (2 buttons)
- 85-Key Keyboard
- Parallel, Serial & PS/2 Ports
- External VGA Port
- MS Works for Windows 3.0
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11

#### COLORBOOK DX2-50

With 50MHz DX2 CPU, 8MB RAM, 250MB Hard Drive and 10.3" LCD  
**\$2995**

### COLORBOOK PACKS

Peripherals and upgrades available only with purchase of a system.

#### Traveler's Packs:

- Case, extra battery & PCMCIA 9,600/2,400 fax/modem. **\$279**
- Case, extra battery & PCMCIA TelePath fax/modem. **\$369**

#### COLORBOOK DX4-75

With 75MHz DX4 CPU, 8MB RAM, 250MB Hard Drive and 10.3" LCD  
**\$3495**

### SOFTWARE & EXTRAS

If a system comes with "choice of application software," choose one of the following packages:

- Microsoft Excel for Windows™
- Microsoft Word for Windows™
- Microsoft Word and Bookshelf® CD-ROM Edition
- Microsoft PowerPoint for Windows™
- Microsoft Project for Windows™
- Microsoft Access™ for Windows
- Publisher's Pack (CD-ROM only; includes CorelDRAW 3.™, ArtShow, MS Publisher 2.0 & MS Design Pack)

- The Entrepreneur Pack (Works™, Publisher™, Money™ & games)
  - Borland Paradox® and Quattro® Pro for Windows spreadsheet
  - Borland Paradox® and C++ (CD-ROM only)
- With desktop and selected portables you also get the following software and extras at no additional charge:
- MS-DOS 6.2 & Windows for Workgroups 3.11
  - CoSession™ Host Remote Diagnostics (with all modems)

- QAPLUS Diagnostics
  - Gateway Computer Glossary
  - Gateway Mouse Pad
- Systems with CD-ROM drives also include:
- Gateway System CD
  - On-Line User's Guide
  - Gateway Mail On-Line Catalog

### SERVICE

Every Gateway system is backed by:

- 30-Day Money-Back Guarantee
- One-Year Limited Warranty
- Lifetime Toll-Free Technical Support
- On-Site Service Available To Most Locations For Desktop Systems
- Lifetime BBS Membership
- FaxBack Automated Fax Service

*Our money-back guarantee does not include shipping. On-site service is provided at no charge during warranty if our technicians determine it is necessary. If you'd like to read our warranty and guarantee policies, please call for a free copy.*



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Julius Caesar, Roman dictator, 44 B.C.

also get your choice of one great software bundle from our Family PC software bundles. When you choose our Microsoft® bundle, you'll get MS Encarta, Golf, Money, and Works Multimedia Edition 3.0.

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Use Microsoft Money to take complete control of your finances quickly and easily. You'll always know where your money is, and where it's going with this complete set of financial tools.

These are just a few of the many possibilities of a Family PC from Gateway 2000. Call today for more information on these incredible systems.

*Our Family PC comes with a 14-inch color SVGA monitor, 101-key keyboard, double-speed CD-ROM, sound card, speakers, joystick, fax/modem and multimedia software. You choose one software option from our great Family PC multi-title packages.*



## The Gateway 2000 Family PC™

Listen and watch legendary figures make speeches, or play interactive games, or get a jump on work from the office — all at home! For all ages, every day of the year, the Family PC from Gateway 2000 fits right into your lifestyle with full multimedia capabilities including sound, pictures, animation and video.

Priced from \$1,495, our Family PCs are loaded with everything you need for a reference library, entertainment center and home office: double-speed CD-ROM drive, 340MB hard drive, data/fax modem, sound card, speakers, and joystick. You



 **GATEWAY2000**  
"You've got a friend in the business."®

8 0 0 - 8 4 6 - 2 0 5 8



# Would've Had Friends In The Business™

*Julius Caesar was head of the Roman empire from 49 to 44 B.C. In 44 B.C. he was killed at the Roman Senate house by his friends. Julius did not have friends in the business.*

allows Gateway technical support representatives to troubleshoot your system on-line. They can also edit configuration files; run diagnostics; upload new drivers and files and, in most cases, install them for you.

You also get a lifetime Gateway Bulletin Board System (BBS) membership with the purchase of a system and modem. This on-line service gives you a convenient way to communicate with us or with other users. On-line technical support, customer service and sales information are only some of the benefits of Gateway's BBS service. You can also download updated drivers, files and utilities for your Gateway PC through the BBS.

## Payment Options

Gateway accepts most major credit cards and C.O.D. terms, with net 30-day terms and leasing options available to qualified

commercial customers. You can also apply for the Gateway 2000 DuoLine™ MasterCard® Card, issued by Dial National Bank. You can make purchases from Gateway and anywhere else MasterCard is accepted with two lines of credit — one for Gateway purchases and one for all other transactions. For Gateway purchases, the card has no annual fee and a low variable interest rate of just 12.9% APR. For other transactions, you get a variable interest rate of 13.9% APR and a low \$18 annual fee.\*



*\*Cash advance fee is \$1 plus 2% of the amount of the cash advance, but not less than \$5 nor more than \$10. Financing is available on approved credit with the Gateway DuoLine MasterCard, issued by Dial National Bank, Des Moines, Iowa. The Annual Percentage Rates shown above are current as of April 1, 1994.*



## INTEGRATED SYSTEMS

### 4SX-33\*/4DX-33\*

- Intel® 33MHz 486SX or DX CPU
- 4MB RAM
- 340MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 14" Color CrystalScan® 1024NI
- Mini Desktop Case
- 5 16-Bit ISA Slots
- 101-Key Keyboard & MS Mouse
- MS-DOS® 6.2 & WFW™ 3.11
- MS Works for Windows™ 3.0
- EPA Energy Star Compliant

**4SX-33 \$1295**

**4DX-33 \$1495**

### 4SX-33\* FAMILY PC™

- Intel 33MHz 486SX CPU
- 4MB RAM
- 340MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM, 16-Bit Sound Card & Speakers
- 2400/9600 Data/Fax Modem
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 14" Color SVGA Monitor
- Mini Desktop Case
- 5 16-Bit ISA Slots
- 101-Key Keyboard, MS Mouse & Joystick
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- Choice of Family PC Software
- EPA Energy Star Compliant

**\$1495**

### 4DX2-66\* FAMILY PC

- Intel 66MHz 486DX2 CPU
- 8MB RAM, 128KB Cache
- 340MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM, 16-Bit Sound Card & Speakers
- 2400/9600 Data/Fax Modem
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
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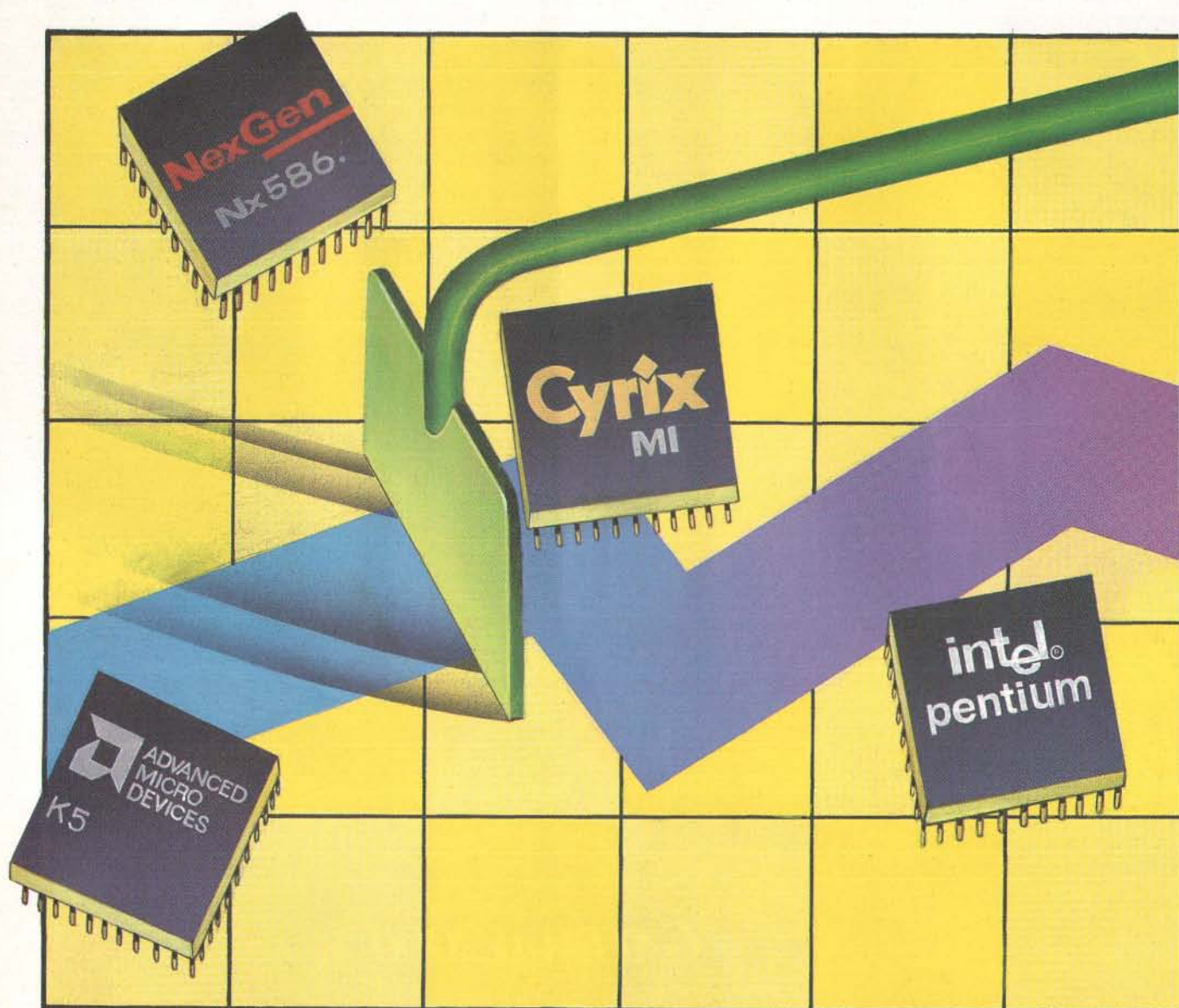
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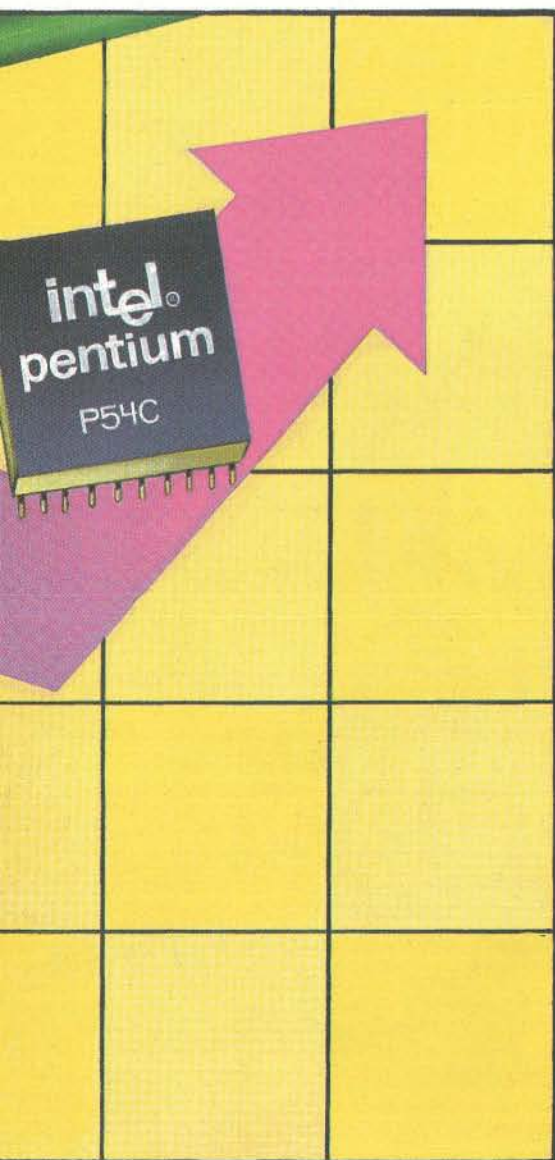
# 80x86 WARS





**It's hard to accept the argument that the Intel 80x86 architecture or its underlying CISC technology is staggering on the brink of extinction. On the contrary, the next few years will see the broadest proliferation of the architecture since the 8086's debut in 1978.**

**TOM R. HALFHILL**



**A**pple is promoting its new Power Macs with charts that show CISC microprocessors sputtering out of gas while RISC chips like the PowerPC race up a steep curve toward superior performance. Actually, the leading CISC architecture—Intel's venerable 80x86—is on the verge of the greatest burst of evolution in its 16-year history. Over the next year, radical new designs from Intel and others will push the 80x86 to new heights of performance while challenging some popular assumptions about the differences between RISC and CISC.

At the same time, though, Intel will find its position as the leader in 80x86 technology increasingly under siege. Not that anyone will mount a serious threat to Intel's overwhelming market dominance; market-research firm Dataquest (San Jose, CA) estimates that Intel commands 74 percent of the worldwide microprocessor market, compared to a meager 8 percent for its nearest competitor Motorola. But until now, Intel alone has defined what is state of the art for an 80x86 microprocessor, and it has enjoyed a formidable technological lead of 12 to 24 months over its rivals.

That will begin to change this year, when competitors such as AMD (Sunnyvale, CA), Cyrix (Richardson, TX), and NexGen (Milpitas, CA) introduce new 80x86 processors that differ significantly from Intel's chips. These original, highly optimized designs promise to deliver better performance than Intel's Pentiums, while maintaining full compatibility with DOS and Windows software. In response, Intel is accelerating the development process and has separate teams of engineers working on the next two generations of its 80x86 simultaneously.

Then there are the wild cards. The 80x86 market is so lucrative—Intel is expected to sell more than 30 million 486 and Pentium chips this year—that it could attract even more competition from parties currently uncommitted. Texas Instruments (Dallas, TX), SGS-Thomson Microelectronics (Saint Genis, France), and IBM Microelectronics (Hopewell Junction, NY) make 486-compatible chips and have the expertise to produce fifth-generation processors but are coy about their future plans. While IBM is focused on making the PowerPC an 80x86 killer, it is also experimenting with the most exotic variant of the 80x86 yet conceived: a PowerPC with accelerated 80x86 emulation hardwired in silicon.

Although RISC chips like the PowerPC offer an approximate 2-to-1 price/performance advantage over the 80x86, that margin is not nearly as wide by the time the chips are packaged into finished systems. And it may not be enough to alter the path of an inertial PC market that historically values software compatibility and safe choices over raw speed and other factors.

For users, these trends have many implications—some good, some bad. On the positive side, you will enjoy many more options. Right now, however, your only choice is an Intel Pentium. Soon you'll be able to choose from a wide variety of PCs with comparable chips from AMD, Cyrix, and NexGen—the K5, M1, and Nx586, respectively. The extra competition is sure to force prices downward, and system vendors will welcome alternative sources of supply. Users who buy a 486 will benefit, too, as those prices drop under pressure from the higher-end chips.

There will also be more variety as the chip companies scramble to differentiate their products. New 486 and 586 processors are appearing in a wider range of clock speeds than ever before, making it easier to match the power of a system to your application and the price to your pocketbook. Different levels of CPU integration will offer still more options. NexGen's Nx586, for example, is really a 586SX, because the FPU is an optional coprocessor. Users who don't need maximum floating-point performance can save about \$150.

The flip side is that more options mean more decisions, and some of those decisions will be more difficult to make. Already, some users have trouble understanding why a 25-MHz 486 is faster than a 33-MHz 386. In the near future, the diverging internal designs of 80x86



# NexGen Nx586 Straddles the RISC/CISC Divide

BOB RYAN

**F**irst and foremost, the NexGen Nx586 is an 80x86 architecture processor; thus, it supports all 80x86 instructions and programmer-visible registers. Programs run on the Nx586 behave just as they do on an Intel 80x86 processor such as the 486 or the Pentium.

What differentiates the Nx586 is its microarchitecture. The instructions that are fetched from memory are standard 80x86 instructions, but the instructions executed in the processing pipelines are RISC-like translations of the CISC 80x86 instructions. NexGen calls them RISC86 instructions and uses them to give the Nx586 Pentium-class performance.

Every processor designer must weigh different trade-offs in deciding what functions to incorporate on-chip. NexGen's decisions regarding Nx586 differ significantly from Intel's decisions with the Pentium. The Nx586 contains three independent execution units—two integer and one address unit—but it does not contain an FPU. NexGen notes that everyone—including Intel—acknowledges that almost all 80x86 code is integer. Thus, NexGen devoted space on the die for split instruction and data caches that are twice as big as the Pentium's and for an integrated level 2 (or L2) cache controller, rather than for an FPU. The Nx587—a companion to the Nx586—provides hardware floating-point support on a separate chip.

The 32 KB of cache memory on-chip is divided into a 16-KB instruction cache and a 16-KB data cache. Both caches are four-way set-associative. In addition, the L2 cache controller supports a four-way organization. This relatively high level of set-associativity results in a higher hit rate on cache accesses. Unlike the primary caches, the secondary cache is unified.

The L2 cache controller communicates with the off-chip L2 cache via a dedicated L2 bus. This eliminates con-

flicts with the external address and data buses. The L2 cache is writeback, while the L1 caches are write-through. The write-through organization of the primary caches lets accesses to the primary and secondary caches occur in parallel. In the event of a miss in a primary cache, much of the secondary cache access has already completed in parallel.

Supporting an external bus, a separate L2 cache interface, and a dedicated FPU interface means that the Nx586 isn't pin-compatible with the Pentium. In fact, it requires a far bigger package—463 pins versus 296 for the P54C Pentium. In addition, the Nx586's external bus is incompatible with that of the Pentium and 486. The Nx586 requires dedicated logic to interface with standard AT systems logic. NexGen currently supplies a chip to support VL-Bus, with PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect) support due later this year.

## CISC into RISC

During processing, the Nx586 fetches CISC instructions from the instruction cache and

stores them in its prefetch buffer. The buffer is divided into three parts, letting the Nx586 manage three different instruction streams at once. This helps keep the execution pipelines filled when the processor is executing instructions speculatively.

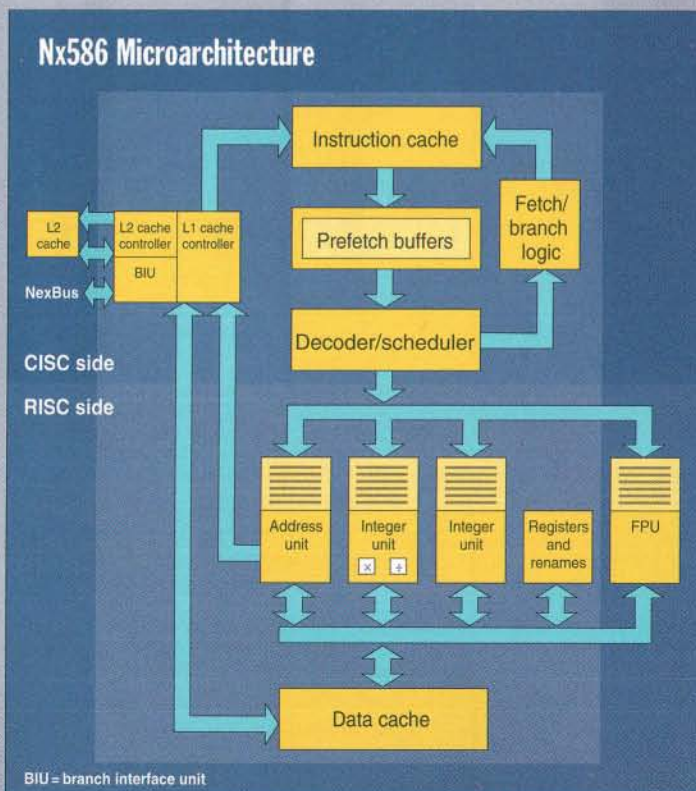
From prefetch, instructions move into the decoder/scheduler, where for every cycle, one CISC instruction is translated into one or more RISC86 instructions. Unlike CISC instructions, the RISC86 instructions implement a load/store memory-access model. Also, they are fixed-length instructions, as opposed to variable-length CISC instructions. However, they are significantly longer than standard 32-bit RISC instructions.

In fact, because they aren't designed to reside in memory, RISC86 instructions bear a strong resemblance to microcode. The major difference is that they are not as in tune with the hardware as is microcode. They are flexible enough to work without modification in both the Nx586 and in future versions of the microarchitecture that might contain a different mix of functional units. You might consider them "micro-architecture instructions."

The decode process translates one CISC instruction per clock cycle and dispatches the one or more resultant RISC86 instructions per clock cycle to the three execution units (four, if you have added an FPU to your machine). Therefore, while the Nx586 is a scalar processor from the CISC point of view, it is superscalar on the RISC side. The main limitation to instruction issue is that no more than one RISC86 instruction can issue to a particular execution unit per cycle.

The three execution units are different. One handles the generation of addresses for load/stores, while the other two handle integer instructions. One of the integer units has integral integer multiply and divide hardware, while the other can handle only simpler integer instructions.

Each execution unit, including the FPU, is fronted with a 14-entry instruction



The Nx586 combines a CISC front end with a RISC-like processing core. It employs dynamic branch prediction and speculative execution to keep its deep pipelines busy.



queue. All instructions must spend at least one cycle in the queue, even if the execution unit is not busy. Because of the variable length of time an instruction can wait in a queue, the pipelines themselves have an indeterminate depth. The shortest time from fetch to retirement is seven cycles.

### Minimizing Penalties

Because the pipelines can get pretty long, the Nx586 devotes a lot of resources to minimizing conditions that can stall or flush them. It uses dynamic branch prediction and speculative execution to let execution continue before it knows the results of a conditional branch. It also uses register renaming and data forwarding to handle data dependencies within the pipelines.

The Nx586 uses 14 rename registers as destinations for writes to the 80x86 architectural registers, including the eight general-purpose registers. When a RISC86 instruction issues from the decoder/scheduler, it is assigned any required rename registers. When it is finally retired, it is allowed to update an architectural register.

The Nx586 fetches, decodes, and translates 80x86 instructions in order and issues RISC86 instructions in order. Instructions can execute and terminate out of order, but they are retired in order. The decoder/scheduler tracks instructions to ensure that they update architectural registers and trigger exceptions in program order.

The Nx586 is a fascinating design. It demonstrates that the 80x86 chip's microarchitecture hardly needs to resemble Intel's offerings. On a range of common benchmarks, it performed comparably to the Pentium. It might even presage some ideas that Intel has planned for the P6 and P7.

As a commercial product, however, the Nx586 has a way to go. It has garnered support from seven motherboard makers and four third-tier system vendors, but as of this writing, the lack of a definite fabrication agreement is troubling. The chip is priced competitively—\$506 per chip in lots of one thousand for the 66-MHz version versus \$750 per chip in lots of one thousand for the comparable Pentium (the Nx587 costs \$128), and its functional mix should result in lower system prices. Overall, the Nx586 shows that NexGen can compete with Intel on the design side, but how NexGen plans to combat Intel's manufacturing muscle is still a mystery. ■

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processors will mean that clock speeds are no longer a convenient shorthand method of comparing performance between different chips, even within the same generation. For instance, the performance of an AMD 100-MHz K5 may differ markedly from that of a Cyrix 100-MHz M1 or an Intel 100-MHz Pentium. The increasingly independent designs may also spur doubts about software compatibility.

### Chasing the Pentium

The engineers at Intel have toiled to produce a new 80x86 generation at a remarkably predictable clock rate; roughly every 44 months since the introduction of the 8086. Performance has scaled at a similar rate. Now, like a clock-doubled CPU, Intel is quickening the pace. Its next generation, code-named P6, is scheduled to debut in 1995, a little more than two years after the Pentium, and the P7 is already in the works. Also, the Pentium team is still pushing the fifth generation with faster clock speeds, smaller process technologies, and higher levels of integration. The P54C 90- and 100-MHz Pentiums began shipping only a year after the 60- and 66-MHz Pentiums, adding new support for clock division, power management, and dualprocessing (see the text box "A Billion-Dollar Ball Game").

Intel is in a hurry because it's hearing footsteps. On one front, Intel is fending off the first credible RISC challenge in the PC market. Even though most observers don't view the PowerPC as a serious immediate threat to Intel's dominance—Dataquest projects the Pentium-class 80x86s will outsell the PowerPC by a ratio of about 5 to 1 through 1996—it nevertheless exposes a chink in Intel's armor. The PowerPC's current price/performance advantage may not be significant enough to woo the average PC user into switching platforms, but it makes Intel's technology look dated, and it could pose a danger if widened.

On another front, Intel faces renewed attacks from those who make 80x86-compatible processors that compete directly with Intel's chips. From a busi-

ness standpoint, this competition has always been more serious because it vies for Intel's primary customers, the system vendors (see the text box "System Vendors Like Variety"). Now, however, the competition is heating up from a technological standpoint as well.

Before the Pentium, the 80x86-compatible processors that AMD, Cyrix, and others made did not stray far from Intel's basic designs. For the sake of software compatibility, of course, they all had to share the same architecture: the instruction set, registers, condition flags, interfaces, and other characteristics that distinguish one type of microprocessor from another. But for the most part, they also conformed closely to Intel's microarchitecture—the internal details that distinguish individual chips within the same microprocessor family.

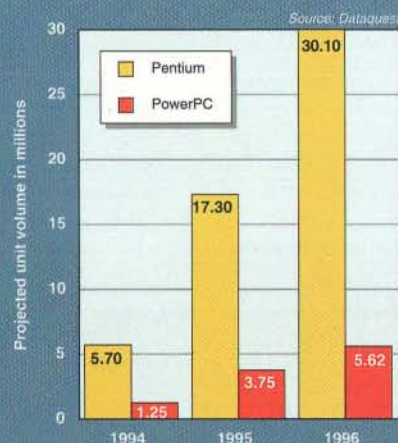
For instance, AMD's 386 and 486 chips use Intel microcode thanks to a cross-licensing agreement. (Intel has been fighting a losing court battle to negate those licenses.) IBM's 486 chips also use Intel microcode under similar agreements, but IBM is hampered by a proviso that limits it to selling chips on motherboards and subsystems, not as separate parts. Cyrix lacks a license to use Intel microcode, so it created a more independent microarchitecture but still didn't push the envelope beyond Intel's technology.

The Pentium, however, marks a fork in the road. For their fifth-generation processors, AMD, Cyrix, and NexGen are attempting to surpass the Pentium's performance with new microarchitectures that

are less derivative. To maintain software compatibility, they will conform to the basic 80x86 architecture, but their internal designs will be increasingly independent. The development cycles for high-end microprocessors are too long for reverse engineering; thus, if they continue to let Intel define what is state of the art for an 80x86 chip, they will never close Intel's 12- to 24-month lead.

A similar situation prevailed in the early 1980s when IBM set the pace for PC systems. Clone

### Pentium vs. PowerPC



Although market-research firm Dataquest projects sales of about 5.6 million units for the PowerPC by 1996, it expects the Pentium to maintain an approximate 5-to-1 lead in sales with 30 million units sold.



vendors generally followed IBM's lead until 1986, when Compaq brashly introduced a 386-based system before IBM. Soon afterward, IBM lost its position as the standard-bearer for the PC platform. AMD, Cyrix, and NexGen would like to pull the same switcheroo on Intel.

### Borrowing from RISC

All three companies insist they can beat Intel at its own game. "When we started with the 386, we were five or six years behind," says Drew Dutton, strategic marketing manager of AMD's PC Products division. "With the 486, we were something like four years behind. The K5 will be about two years behind the Pentium, but closing the gap with the P54C and P6 is absolutely going to happen very shortly." More specifically, the K5 will deliver about 30 percent more performance than a Pentium at the same clock speed, says PC Products division vice president Robert McConnell.

Cyrix makes similar claims for its M1. "At introduction, M1 will be a technically superior product," says Steve Domenik, vice president of marketing. "The M1 will deliver more performance at the same clock speed. Based on simulations, it ranges from something like 30 percent to two times or even two-and-a-half times faster. Without [the software] running on silicon, it's hard to be too aggressive with those claims, but there's no question we'll have higher performance."

NexGen, the only Intel competitor that actually has silicon samples of its Pentium-class processor, claims the Nx586 will best an identically clocked Pentium, at least when running integer math. For example, NexGen says that at 60 MHz, the Nx586 measured performance gains of 8 percent with the Landmark 2.0 benchmark and 28 percent with the BYTE 2.4 benchmark. (BYTE was unable to independently verify NexGen's results in time for this

story.) On the other hand, NexGen says the Nx586 obtained lower performance than a Pentium when running the PowerMeter 1.81 benchmark (-14 percent) and Norton Speed Index 7.0 (-7 percent).

Again, the reason why performance doesn't scale with clock speed across these competing chips is that they're using different microarchitectures. What the chips have in common, however, is that they're all adapting RISC technology to pump new life into a 16-year-old CISC architecture that 140 million PC users are loath to abandon.

The first hints of RISC technology began appearing in 80x86 processors in 1989, when Intel's 486 integrated an FPU, more hard-wired instruction logic, and pipelining. The FPU was Intel's first response to the superior floating-point performance of RISC chips. The additional instruction logic reduced the 486's reliance on microcode. And the 8-KB cache helped to keep

## A Billion-Dollar Ball Game

There are three ways to make a faster microprocessor: increase the clock speed; design a better microarchitecture; or increase the transistor density. All these methods are interrelated, and each carries its own set of trade-offs.

Boosting the clock speed allows a CPU to process instructions more quickly, but it also requires more wattage, dissipates more heat, and increases the cost of other system components. Designing a better microarchitecture improves throughput, but it can take years of R&D. Also, it usually requires more logic, which increases the transistor count, enlarges the chip's die size, and hikes the manufacturing cost. Increasing the transistor density enables higher clock speeds and better microarchitectures, but it also dissipates more heat, unless the voltage is decreased to compensate. Lower voltages require system vendors to redesign their motherboards and chip vendors to redesign their peripheral components.

Microprocessor evolution typically follows this course: First, a better microarchitecture introduces a new generation of that CPU family. Later versions within that generation boost the clock speed and increase the transistor density (if not the actual transistor count) as smaller process technologies become available. Finally, when higher clock speeds and greater densities yield diminishing levels of return, the next-generation microarchitecture de-

buts, and the whole cycle starts over again.

Intel's 486 is a classic example. When introduced in 1989, the 486 offered a better scalar architecture than the 386, ran at 25 MHz, and was fabricated on a 1.0-micron process. Later, Intel shifted manufacturing to a denser 0.8-micron process and boosted clock speeds to 66 MHz. This year, Intel announced the 100-MHz IntelDX4 and moved production to a 0.6-micron line. Meanwhile, Intel also initiated another product cycle by introducing the next-generation Pentium.

This is a high-stakes game in which few companies are equipped to compete. A state-of-the-art, submicron fabrication plant (known as a *fab*) costs a billion dollars and takes years to build. Because a high-end microprocessor also takes years to develop, engineers have to target a fab process that isn't yet available. If everything does not come together at the right moment, the result can be financial disaster.

Some chip vendors dodge this problem by subcontracting all their fab work to outside suppliers. Cyrix and NexGen are "fabless" design houses that rely entirely on other semiconductor companies to manufacture chips. Cyrix now subcontracts its fab work to SGS-Thomson and IBM Microelectronics. The IBM deal, announced in April, should assure Cyrix's customers that supply will meet demand. In addition, it gives IBM the right to produce



an equal number of Cyrix-designed chips (including the M1 and its successors) for use in its own systems or for sale to other system vendors.

Intel, AMD, and IBM Microelectronics have their own fabs, but they often fall short of demand. Intel and AMD are building new fabs, and AMD is also farming out work to DEC. Companies with excess capacity frequently make deals like this to recoup the huge costs of their fabs.

The capital investments for fabs are becoming so great that they almost dictate a semiconductor company's business strategy. In 1992, Intel ceded the still-healthy 386 market to AMD to produce more 486 chips, which command a higher price and are more profitable.

These business strategies should be kept in mind when comparing the price/performance ratios of competing microprocessors. For example, although RISC chips like the PowerPC 601 enjoy an approximate 2-to-1 price/performance advantage over the Pentium, it's not clear that it is entirely due to a corresponding difference in manufacturing costs. Both chips are now made on similar processes with similar transistor densities. Intel may simply be charging higher prices to amortize its capital investments more quickly. All semiconductor companies must play by the same basic rules of physics and finance.



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the 486's pipeline efficiently filled with instructions.

**Pipelining** is a key feature. It works like an automotive assembly line, substituting program instructions for cars. A pipeline has multiple stages, and instructions pass in lockstep from one stage to another. While some instructions are passing through the execution stages, following instructions can be moving through the fetch and decode stages. Once the pipeline starts flowing, the chip can process more instructions per clock cycle than a nonpipelined chip running at the same speed.

Pipelining and less microcode allow the 486 to process many of its instructions at

an effective rate of one instruction per clock cycle, compared to a dozen or more clock cycles required by earlier 80x86 chips. (RISC chips achieve the same result partly by using simpler instructions that inherently require fewer clock cycles.)

Cyrix adapted some of these techniques to its 386-generation chips, creating 386/486 hybrids like the 486SLC. TI, under an agreement with Cyrix, introduced some 386/486 variants based on the Cyrix core. IBM's 486SLC2 is a similar crossbreed, combining a 486 pipeline and instruction set with a larger cache, a doubled clock, and a 386SX-style bus. But while IBM, Cyrix, TI, and AMD were still

trying to match Intel's 486, Intel raised the bar again in 1993 with the Pentium.

Because the 486 is a scalar processor (i.e., single-pipelined), its theoretical throughput limit is one instruction per clock cycle. To break that barrier, Intel endowed the Pentium with two pipelines that can handle two instructions simultaneously. This allows the Pentium to issue some instructions at an effective rate greater than one per clock cycle, even though each instruction still requires at least one clock cycle to process.

Strictly speaking, this superscalar design is not part of the classic definition of RISC; some RISC processors, like the Mips R4000, don't have superscalar pipelines. But superscalar is generally lumped into the domain of RISC technology, because the complex nature of a CISC instruction set makes multiple pipelines difficult to implement.

For example, unlike RISC processors, which typically use 32-bit fixed-length instructions aligned on even-word boundaries, the 80x86 uses unaligned, variable-length instructions ranging from 8 to 120 bits. They are more troublesome to handle than are uniform RISC instructions, because the processor must decode their length before fetching the next instruction.

Self-modifying code and other stunts cause even more thorny problems when designing a superscalar 80x86. For instance, some programmers exploit the 80x86's irregular instruction format by writing code that executes in two different ways, depending on the fetch alignment. In other words, a byte that represents an operand field when fetched one way might be interpreted as an op code when fetched another way. Designing a superscalar 80x86 that won't choke on amusing little tricks like these is what makes CPU architects strangers to their families.

The superscalar Pentium successfully solves these problems and adopts a few other RISC-like features: a pipelined FPU with dedicated math logic; separate 8-KB instruction and data caches (compared to a unified 8-KB cache on the original 486); and a branch target buffer for branch prediction. The Pentium is really a hybrid CISC/RISC design that mocks the rivalry between these two philosophies and opens the door to further cross-pollination.

And that's exactly how AMD, Cyrix, and NexGen seek to leapfrog the Pentium; they intend to pick up where the Pentium leaves off. Cyrix, for example, is attacking another hoary CISC limitation: the register file. CISC processors typically have fewer GPRs (general-purpose registers) than RISC processors; in the case of the 80x86,

## System Vendors Like Variety

**S**ystem vendors and motherboard manufacturers will generally welcome the arrival of Pentium-class processors from AMD, Cyrix, and NexGen, even if some of them don't anticipate using any chips other than Intel's. They figure the extra competition will help drive down prices, ease supply shortages, open up new design options, and accelerate development.

Compaq (Houston, TX), currently the number-three system vendor behind Apple and IBM, says multiple sourcing is crucial to its goal of becoming number one by 1996. That's why Compaq recently signed a deal with AMD, even though Intel will remain its primary supplier of CPUs. Compaq is also a financial backer of NexGen, although no deal to use NexGen chips in Compaq systems has been announced.

"By working with Intel and AMD, which each have a different combination of price/performance in their products, we're better able to offer more choices to our customers to meet their needs," says John Sweney, Compaq's program manager for technical public relations. "For us, it's great to have relationships with both Intel and AMD."

Acer America (San Jose, CA) is another system vendor that relies primarily on Intel but also buys some CPUs from AMD. (Acer buys chips from Cyrix, too, but only for bare-bones motherboards sold to other vendors.) Acer has signed nondisclosure agreements to evaluate the forthcoming AMD K5 and Cyrix M1 processors, but it is concerned about how extensively its motherboards must be redesigned to accommodate the chips. "If the chip has a pin-out that's not compatible with Intel's, then it has to offer a strong price/performance advantage to make it worth our time

to redesign," says John Chang, Acer's senior director of product marketing.

One solution is to design a motherboard that accepts a CPU daughtercard, allowing maximum flexibility. Properly designed, a CPU daughtercard won't impair performance, Chang says, but it adds to the cost of the motherboard.

Compaq, like Acer, makes all its own motherboards but is less concerned about minor differences among competing CPUs. "It doesn't impose any particular design issues for us because we're constantly redesigning our boards anyway," says Sweney. He notes that some of Compaq's motherboards are designed specifically for Intel chips, others will be designed for AMD chips, and some for either.

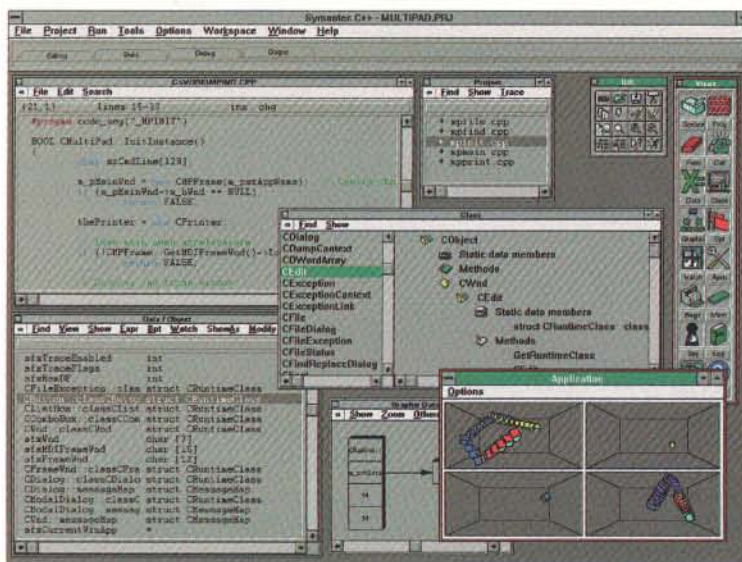
Micronics (Fremont, CA), a motherboard supplier that cranks out 40,000 to 50,000 boards a month, says it fine-tunes its designs to specific processors and buys Intel chips exclusively—however, that could change. "We still haven't had a compelling reason to jump ship," says Tom Benoit, corporate marketing manager at Micronics. "Would we? Yes. It would have to be something that offers better performance or more differentiation—and, of course, lower price. The PC market is a very price-sensitive market."

But price isn't everything. Benoit points out that even though he could probably get a better deal on Cyrix 486 chips right now, Cyrix uses a writeback cache instead of the write-through cache on Intel's 486. That would require Micronics to modify its motherboards, so it's easier to stick with Intel. "It's not as simple as who's got the cheapest part or who's got the fastest part," he says. "And there's something to be said for maintaining a relationship."



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there are only eight GPRs, compared to 32 in the PowerPC 601. But the Cyrix M1 will have 32 GPRs, using a technique called *dynamic register renaming*, which makes it appear as if there are only eight registers in use at a time, thus preserving compatibility with existing software that expects to see only eight registers.

The M1's superscalar pipelines will also

be two stages longer than the Pentium's and will handle more instructions in parallel without stalling. The M1 also takes advantage of its larger register file to implement *speculative execution*, which allows the chip to continue to process instructions, with up to four levels of branching, without waiting for a branch to be resolved. If the branch prediction makes the

wrong bet, *transparent repair* can back out of the speculative execution in a single cycle. In this respect, the M1 takes even greater pains than some RISC chips to keep its pipelines primed.

Fewer details are known about AMD's K5, but AMD promises it will borrow similar RISC-like techniques to achieve higher performance. "If you look back to around

## BYTE Lab Benchmarks the First P54C Systems

**RICK GREHAN AND  
SELINDA CHIQUOINE**

**T**he BYTE Lab received five beta P54C Pentium-based systems for preliminary testing. The systems included a Gateway P5-90, the Hewlett-Packard NetServer 5/90 LM, the HP Vectra XU 5/90C, the Intel Neptune, and the Intergraph TD-3. The Neptune was unique in that it housed a 100-MHz Pentium processor; the others used 90-MHz CPUs. The Intel machine is a development prototype and is not scheduled to be available for sale.

Although we would have preferred testing all machines under a single operating system, that was not to be. Three of the machines arrived configured with Windows NT 3.1, the remaining two—the Gateway and the Intel—were running Windows for Workgroups 3.11.

Since we were concentrating on the performance of the processor, we ran only BYTE's Portable benchmarks. We compiled the benchmarks using Watcom's 32-bit C++ compiler, setting the switches so that the output was optimized for the Pentium (as recommended by Watcom). Strictly speaking, this let us run the same *object* on all systems; the only difference was the link. For the NT systems, we created an NT character-mode executable file; for the Windows for Workgroups systems, we created a DOS extended-mode executable file (using the Rational Systems DOS Extender bundled with the Watcom compiler).

Most of the systems showed an improvement somewhere around two to just under two-and-a-half times that of a 66-MHz 486 (our baseline) for integer performance. Floating-point performance was better—somewhere between two-and-a-

half to three times that of the baseline.

There were results of note that are not broken out in the table. First, the transcendental operations in the Pentium's integrated FPU show a significant performance improvement over their 486 counterparts. Second, the HP NetServer and Intergraph's TD-3 both turned in remarkable scores for those tests that were built around vector operations and therefore favored memory access that was sequential in nature. Those scores allowed the NetServer and TD-3 to surpass the Intel machine in the final index values, even though the Intel Neptune turned in better scores on all other tests. ■

Rick Grehan is the technical director for the BYTE Lab. Selinda Chiquoine is a BYTE Lab assistant. You can reach them on the Internet or BIX at [rick\\_g@bix.com](mailto:rick_g@bix.com) and [schiquoine@bix.com](mailto:schiquoine@bix.com), respectively.

### Feature and Performance Comparison



GATEWAY P5-90



HP NETSERVER 5/90 LM



HP VECTRA XU 5/90C



INTEL NEPTUNE



INTERGRAPH TD-3

	GATEWAY P5-90	HP NETSERVER 5/90 LM	HP VECTRA XU 5/90C	INTEL NEPTUNE	INTERGRAPH TD-3
CPU/speed (MHz)	Pentium/90	Pentium/90	Pentium/90	Pentium/100	Pentium/90
Secondary cache (KB)	256	512	256	512	512
RAM (as tested, MB)	16	64	64	64	32
Memory width (bits)	32	32	64	64	64
Native operating system	Windows for Workgroups 3.11	Windows NT 3.1	Windows NT 3.1	Windows for Workgroups 3.11	Windows NT 3.1
Integer index <sup>1</sup>	1.89	2.42	2.02	2.25	2.37
Floating-point index <sup>1</sup>	2.46	3.3	2.61	2.9	3.12
System price (base configuration)	\$3995	\$7949	\$5579	N/A <sup>2</sup>	\$7300
Company Information	Gateway 2000 (800) 846-2000 (605) 232-2000 fax: (605) 232-2023	Hewlett-Packard Co. (800) 322-4772 fax: (208) 344-4809	Hewlett-Packard Co. (800) 752-0900 fax: (208) 344-4809	Intel Corp. (800) 548-4725 (408) 765-8080 fax: (800) 628-2293	Intergraph Corp. (800) 345-4856 (205) 730-5372 fax: (205) 730-9441

<sup>1</sup> Benchmark results are indexed against a 486/66 PC, which equals 1. Higher numbers indicate better performance.

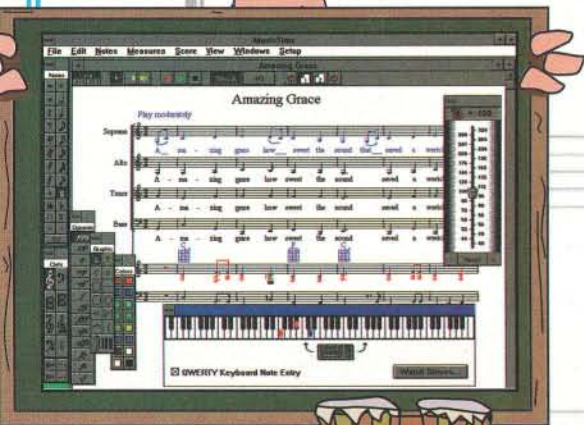
<sup>2</sup> Not for sale by Intel N/A = not available



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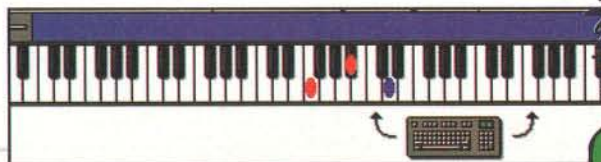
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1988, when we got into the RISC marketplace with the Am29000, RISC had a 5-to-1 advantage," says AMD's Dutton. "Now it's at best 2 to 1. That's going away. Both AMD and Intel and other 80x86 vendors are going to prove that." Significantly, the chief architect of AMD's K5 is Mike Johnson, who designed the Am29000 RISC chip and wrote *Superscalar Microprocessor Design* (Prentice-Hall, 1991), a seminal engineering book on superscalar RISC.

In a rare moment of Intel/AMD détente, Lew Paceley, marketing director for Intel's P6 division (Hillsboro, OR), agrees: "RISC is a technology; it's not an architecture. There's a difference. If it's a technology, everybody can exploit it. They may exploit it in slightly different ways, but the basic technology is available to everybody."

### Reinventing the 80x86

NexGen's Nx586 appears to go even further toward the merger of RISC and CISC. It also hints at future possibilities for Intel's P6 and P7 chips, and may even foreshadow how the rumored PowerPC 615 will work its magic of emulating 80x86 code (see the text box "An 80x86-Compatible PowerPC?").

The Nx586 incorporates most of the

RISC-like technology that suddenly is becoming standard in advanced 80x86 microarchitecture: long superscalar pipelines, wider data paths, on-board instruction/data caches (twice as large as the Pentium's), a larger register file with dynamic renaming, branch prediction, and speculative execution—with the enhanced ability to process streams of instructions nested three branches deep (see the text box "NexGen Nx586 Straddles the RISC/CISC Divide" on page 76).

What is most intriguing about the Nx586, however, is its unique decoder unit. In three stages, it fetches an 80x86 instruction, aligns it on an even boundary, and decodes it into one or more simpler instructions that belong to what NexGen calls the RISC86 instruction set. In other words, the decoder converts unaligned, variable-length CISC instructions into fully aligned, fixed-length RISC instructions that are pumped into the virtual equivalent of a RISC core. In effect, the Nx586 is a RISC chip with an 80x86 front end.

NexGen's RISC86 instruction set is optimized for 80x86 decoding. The decoder maps many of the simpler 80x86 instructions directly to their RISC86 counterparts, so a single CISC instruction is converted into a single RISC instruction. More com-

plex 80x86 instructions must be decoded into multiple RISC instructions; NexGen says the worst case is a 3-to-1 ratio in the basic set of instructions. The decoder issues RISC86 instructions at a rate of one per clock cycle per execution unit.

In concept, the Nx586 decoder works like the code generator of a compiler, except at a lower level. Just as a C++ compiler converts C code into 80x86 machine code, the Nx586 decoder converts 80x86 machine code into RISC86 code.

Intel downplays NexGen's RISC86 and says the Pentium does something similar when it decodes complex 80x86 instructions into microcode primitives; in a sense, this is true. Complex instructions are broken down into 88-bit, fixed-length microinstructions that could be regarded as "RISC instructions," and many simple instructions don't require microcode at all because they're hard-wired in silicon. Intel also makes a valid point that code generators in modern compilers tend to avoid complex 80x86 instructions, because they can generate faster-running code by sticking to simpler instructions.

RISC86 instructions share some characteristics with Pentium microinstructions: They're quite long (the Nx586's eight-chip predecessor used 104-bit RISC86 instructions) and carry vital information of processor states that normally wouldn't be known to a true external RISC instruction. But there's still an important difference: Unlike microcode, NexGen's RISC86 can theoretically support its own assemblers, compilers, and application software. The Nx586 bus can bypass the 80x86 decoder and feed RISC86 instructions directly into the execution stages of the pipeline at full bus speeds. In fact, NexGen already has a RISC86 assembler, although it's for internal use only, since there's obviously no software market for RISC86 binaries.

But what if Intel introduced something like RISC86 in a future processor? NexGen, a small start-up company with zero market share, cannot hope that RISC86 will ever spawn its own software base. But Intel has considerably more influence. What if Intel defined a new 80x86 RISC instruction set and register file that coexisted with the CISC

### FIFTH-GENERATION 80x86 FEATURE COMPARISON

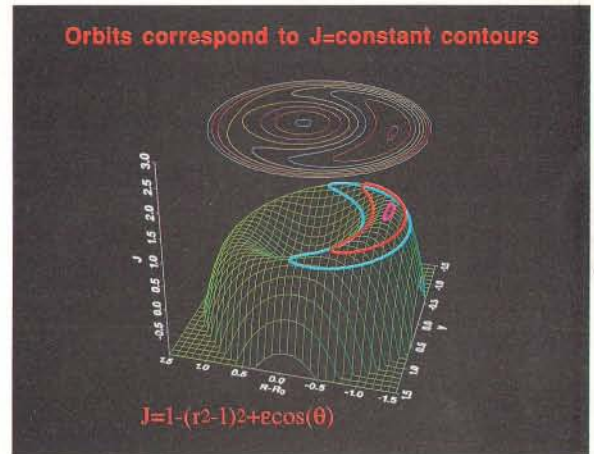
	INTEL PENTIUM	INTEL P54C	NEXGEN NX586	CYRIX M1	AMD K5
Superscalar micro-architecture	Two integer pipes, three execution units	Two integer pipes, three execution units	Two integer pipes, three execution units, and an optional FPU	Two integer pipes, four execution units	Unknown, but probably two integer pipes, at least three execution units
Pipelining	Five-stage integer pipes	Five-stage integer pipes	Variable-length integer pipes; seven-stage minimum	Seven-stage integer pipes	Unknown
FPU	Integrated and pipelined	Integrated and pipelined	Optional, not pipelined	Integrated, not pipelined	Unknown
Register file	Eight GPRs	Eight GPRs	22 GPRs with register renaming	32 GPRs with register renaming	Unknown
Branch prediction	Dynamic	Dynamic	Dynamic with speculative execution	Dynamic with speculative execution	Unknown
L1 cache	8-KB instruction, 8-KB data; two-way set-associative	8-KB instruction, 8-KB data; two-way set-associative	16-KB instruction, 16-KB data; four-way set-associative	Unified cache (probably 16 KB), with 256-byte instruction-line cache	Unknown
Clock speeds	60 or 66 MHz	90 or 100 MHz with clock-divided bus	60 or 66 MHz	90 or 100 MHz with clock-divided bus	Unknown, probably 60 to 100 MHz
Status	Shipped May 1993	Shipped March 1994	Sampling now, ships summer 1994	Late 1994	Late 1994



# UNLEASH Your Pentium/486

The Pentium is the first x86 product in the last few years that bucks the trend away from faster PC numerics. It achieves improved speed by combining a CISC front end with an execution unit that uses RISC principles. This makes the Pentium sensitive to instruction scheduling. The Intel i860, which is the current leader in the embedded numerics field, can do up to two operations per cycle. While the Pentium can only do an operation every other cycle, this is much better than the 487, which can often take many cycles per operation. To help overcome the small 8 deep x87 numeric stack size, the Pentium makes it possible to exchange stack values at no cost. The machine code that results is difficult to read, but helps the Pentium run on a par with chips that have true numeric registers.

Microway's Pentium compilers take full advantage of the Pentium's dual numeric units using the same techniques we employ for the i860's dual units. Unlike integer programs, which benefit from the Pentium's Superscalar features, numeric-bound applications require a combination of instruction scheduling and loop unrolling to hit full speed. The Pentium code we produce for routines like DAXPY is virtually identical to the code recommended by Intel and better than the code we have seen in articles on the subject. The resulting programs run over a factor of two faster than older 16 and 32-bit compilers that do not feature register caching or loop unrolling. Call for our Pentium White Paper which compares the NDP family with other x86 Fortran and C/C++ compilers.



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instructions and supported its own native assemblers and compilers?

Linley Gwennap, editor in chief of the *Microprocessor Report* (Sebastopol, CA), thinks Intel might take this approach with the P7. "In this way, Intel will offer the performance of RISC while maintaining compatibility," he says. "And then, Intel might say to software developers, 'Oh, by the way, if you recompile using the new Intel instruction set, those applications would run really fast.' And other applications not converted [that is, still compiled for the CISC instruction set] would still run pretty fast."

Intel's Paceley says it isn't necessary to define a new RISC instruction set because today's compilers already strive to target a subset of 80x86 instructions that require fewer clock cycles. Interestingly, AMD's Johnson predicted this would happen three years ago in an appendix to his book on superscalar RISC design: "It should be possible to define a core set of [CISC] instructions that have at least some RISC-like qualities," Johnson wrote. "Once the data paths have been designed to execute these instructions in a single cycle, we are close to being able to apply the [superscalar RISC] techniques we have studied in this book."

Paceley hints that Intel will take another step in this direction by streamlining the instruction decoder in the P6. "Our architects know a lot about how to decode 80x86 instructions," he says. "They can figure out how to rip what would be this instruction decoder in a RISC machine and integrate it with the 80x86 decoder. Yeah, there's going to be a little microcode ROM off to the side to handle some strange cases, but by and large, anything that they're doing inside, we can do inside."

Whether Intel codifies a subset of RISC-like instructions or professes a whole new instruction set, this trend strikes at the very heart of the remaining differences between RISC and CISC. To the extent that designers can minimize the decoding overhead and keep it transparent to the software, either approach could open broad new avenues for future 80x86 evolution.

## Dangers of Divergence

As IBM, NexGen, Cyrix, and AMD keep pushing their micro-

architectures along paths that increasingly diverge from Intel's and from each other's, it becomes more and more difficult to ensure that software will run exactly the same on everybody's chips. This burden is entirely borne by the chip vendors, of course; users and developers insist on absolute compatibility. Everyone admits the potential problem and agrees on the answer: rigorous compatibility testing that begins on simulators long before a new CPU is etched into silicon.

All the CPU vendors verify their new designs with extensive test suites that include real-world applications as well as special sequences of code that probe every known boundary condition. NexGen, as a newcomer, has more to prove, but the other

companies have successfully navigated these waters for years. Everyone remembers what happened to the early system vendors whose PC clones were only 90 percent compatible.

Intel has no particular advantage here. Its processors are evolving in unforeseen directions, too, and must conform to the same software base. "Compatibility is defined by the software, not by the microarchitecture that existed yesterday," notes Peggy Herubin, director of applications engineering at Cyrix.

Another software issue, more related to performance than compatibility, is optimized compilation. This is one spin-off of RISC that 80x86 vendors would rather not deal with. RISC architects realized years ago they could reap even more performance if compilers were in tune with the chip's microarchitecture, especially in superscalar designs. Superscalar pipelines typically impose restrictions on the types of instructions they can process simultaneously. Careful instruction-ordering can maximize a pipeline's throughput.

For instance, the Pentium's twin pipes can work concurrently only on simple instructions. Typically, these are nonmicrocoded instructions requiring only one clock cycle. A smart compiler that strings a number of these instructions together while minimizing dependencies will generate up to 30 percent faster-running code. Intel recognized this when designing the Pentium and spent two years creating optimized code generators for license to vendors.

Software developers will not recompile their programs for every new 80x86 variant. Intel, as the market leader, theoretically enjoys an advantage, because the smaller companies have virtually no influence over developers.

The competitors don't see this as a problem. First, they point out that even a year after introduction, almost nobody optimizes their software for the Pentium. Indeed, even though it has been nine years since Intel introduced the 32-bit 386, almost all PC applications are still compiled to 16-bit code. Most DOS programs, such as Lotus 1-2-3 release 2.x and WordPerfect 5.1 Plus, are compiled for the first-generation 8086, because millions of XT-class machines are still in use. Some DOS programs, such as

## An 80x86-Compatible PowerPC?

The most exotic application of CISC-to-RISC instruction translation might be IBM's rumored PowerPC 615 (IBM won't confirm or deny its existence). This chip could run 80x86 software using a sophisticated decoder similar to NexGen's, rather than the wasteful method of integrating an 80x86 core. Instead of decoding 80x86 into RISC86, however, it would convert 80x86 into native PowerPC instructions.

IBM already has this technology working in software. It's called the IST (Instruction-Set Translator), and it uses advanced code-analysis and caching techniques to convert 80x86 code into RISC code (see "Emulation: RISC's Secret Weapon," April BYTE). Implementing the IST in hardware could yield big performance gains and render the emulation so transparent that many users would mistake it for a native 80x86.

One source told BYTE that the IST front end might be implemented in a coprocessor chip, rather than integrated with the PowerPC. There are three reasons for this: (1) it would minimize the PowerPC's die size and reduce fabrication costs; (2) it would let system vendors offer models with or without the emulation coprocessor and perhaps let users add the chip later; and (3) if Intel sues IBM over the technology and wins an injunction, sales of motherboards with the empty socket could continue, and IBM wouldn't have to pull the CPU itself off the market.

Intel acknowledges that this approach to emulation could deliver near-native performance but adds that it might backfire on IBM if the performance is too good. Software developers might regard the PowerPC as just another 80x86-compatible chip and stop writing native PowerPC software. But one software developer dismissed this notion: "Even if we can get a 10 percent difference by going native, we'll go native," said Dennis Moore, director of product marketing at Oracle (Redwood Shores, CA). If IBM decides to introduce a chip like the PowerPC 615, it's expected to hit the market sometime in mid-1995.



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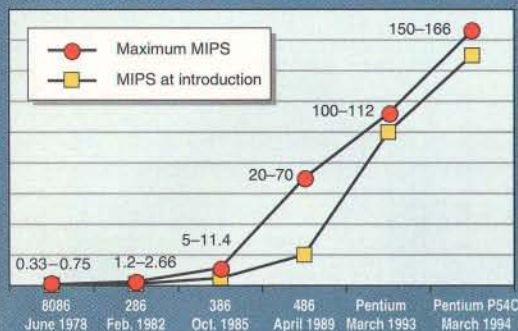


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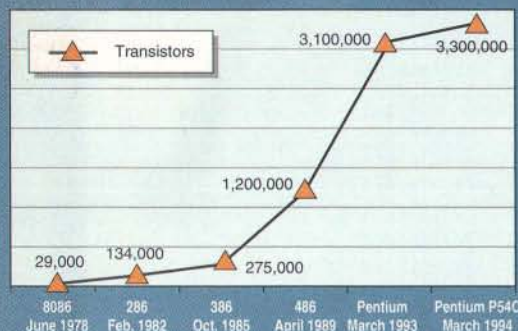


## 80x86 Evolution: Performance



Since its introduction, the performance of the 80x86 architecture has scaled at a remarkably steady pace. The first 8086 was clocked at 5 MHz and executed about 330,000 instructions per second. The current top-of-the-line 80x86 is the new 100-MHz Pentium P54C, which is benchmarked at 166.3 MIPS. On the chart, the lower line measures performance of the fastest available 80x86 processor at introduction. The upper line shows the maximum available performance for each Intel generation.

## 80x86 Evolution: Transistor Density



Higher performance requires more logic circuitry, and this is reflected in the steadily rising transistor densities of 80x86 processors. While the number of transistors per chip has increased more than 100 times over the past 16 years, performance has increased more than 500 times. (Note: The latest P54C Pentiums have 3.3 million transistors due to additional integrated power management functions and an interrupt controller.)

Lotus 1-2-3 release 3.x and WordPerfect 6.0, are compiled for the 286. Some Windows programs are compiled for the 386. This probably won't change until Microsoft releases a 32-bit version of Windows, Intel sells more Pentiums, and developers overhaul their software.

In any case, developers favor a blended approach to optimization that is not closely tied to the Pentium's specific microarchitecture. In fact, it yields some gains on the 486 and 386 as well. "That kind of recompile is something that any superscalar architecture can take advantage of, so it doesn't hurt us at all," says AMD's Dutton.

More specific optimizations are possible but unlikely. It wouldn't even serve Intel's interests, because the P6 and P7 will have different microarchitectures than the Pentium. "Most of the compiler writers are doing generic optimizations," says Cyrix's Herubin. "Obviously, they don't want their compilers to only perform well on the Pentium. They want to perform well on the whole line of 80x86."

## Benefits of Divergence

Although diverging microarchitectures pose some dangers, the reasons for pursuing them are simply too strong to ignore. First, the engineers need all the maneuvering room they can get for new designs that will boost performance. But also, the

chip vendors need some way to differentiate their products. Paradoxically, their main selling point is that their chips are so compatible that users shouldn't notice any difference.

In the past, Intel's competitors have sought to distinguish themselves in three main ways: lower prices; continued production of chips that Intel is phasing out in favor of the next generation; and exploiting market niches that Intel ignores. For instance, when Intel shifted the bulk of its production from the 386 to the 486, there was still healthy demand for 386 chips. AMD and Cyrix did not have their 486 processors ready anyway, so they cleaned up after Intel by shipping huge volumes of the 386. Intel was willing to forsake the 386 at that point because prices had dropped very low and the 486 was more profitable. It will be interesting to see if AMD and Cyrix continue this strategy now that they're trying to leapfrog Intel's technology. Like Intel, they may find it more worthwhile to devote their expensive foundry capacity to leading-edge products.

Filling market niches is another traditional strategy of Intel's rivals. For example, Intel's fastest 386 is clocked at 33 MHz; AMD makes a 40-MHz chip. The fastest 486 was Intel's clock-doubled 33- and 66-MHz DX2 until IBM introduced its clock-tripled Blue Lightning 33/100. Intel offered

no direct upgrade path from the 386 to the 486; Cyrix makes a 386/486 hybrid that's pin-compatible with 386 sockets.

But Intel has caught on to this strategy. Over the past two years, it has introduced a much wider variety of 80x86 chips and is paying closer attention to holes in its product line. For instance, the recently shipped 100-MHz IntelDX4 neatly fills a performance gap between the 66-MHz 486DX2 and the 60-MHz Pentium. And Intel plans to offer a direct upgrade path from the 486 to the Pentium via the Pentium OverDrive Processor (code-named P24T), for which sockets already exist on many PC motherboards.

NexGen is boldly attempting to differentiate its Nx586 by offering the FPU as an optional coprocessor. This is an interesting experiment in reality engineering versus marketing hype, because NexGen must overcome a broad public perception that FPUs significantly improve the performance of spreadsheet programs and screen graphics. Everyone from Intel to the software developers agrees that floating-point performance is relatively unimportant for almost all PC applications, but many users simply won't buy a machine without an FPU.

NexGen's separate FPU notwithstanding, higher integration is a likely path toward future product differentiation. For instance, the Nx586 is the first 80x86 to integrate a level 2 cache controller, allowing the use of less-expensive SRAM (static RAM), while preserving high-speed access. The new 90- and 100-MHz Pentiums integrate an APIC (Advanced Programmable Interrupt Controller) for multiprocessing. DEC's Alpha 21066, although not an 80x86-compatible CPU, integrates a PCI (Personal Component Interconnect) controller and some video-control functions—a logical possibility for an 80x86. There's even serious speculation about integrating a DSP (digital signal processor) on an 80x86, perhaps with some hardware support for Microsoft's new DSP manager.

The inescapable conclusion is that the 80x86, ancient though it may be, is far from a dead architecture. It still attracts more engineering resources than any other CPU architecture that ever existed, and it's evolving in more lively directions than ever. In all likelihood, the 80x86 will continue to flourish until another architecture offers a wide enough price/performance margin to convince most users that it's time for a change. ■

Tom R. Halfhill is a BYTE senior news editor based in San Mateo, California. You can reach him on the Internet or BIX at [thalfhill@bix.com](mailto:thalfhill@bix.com).



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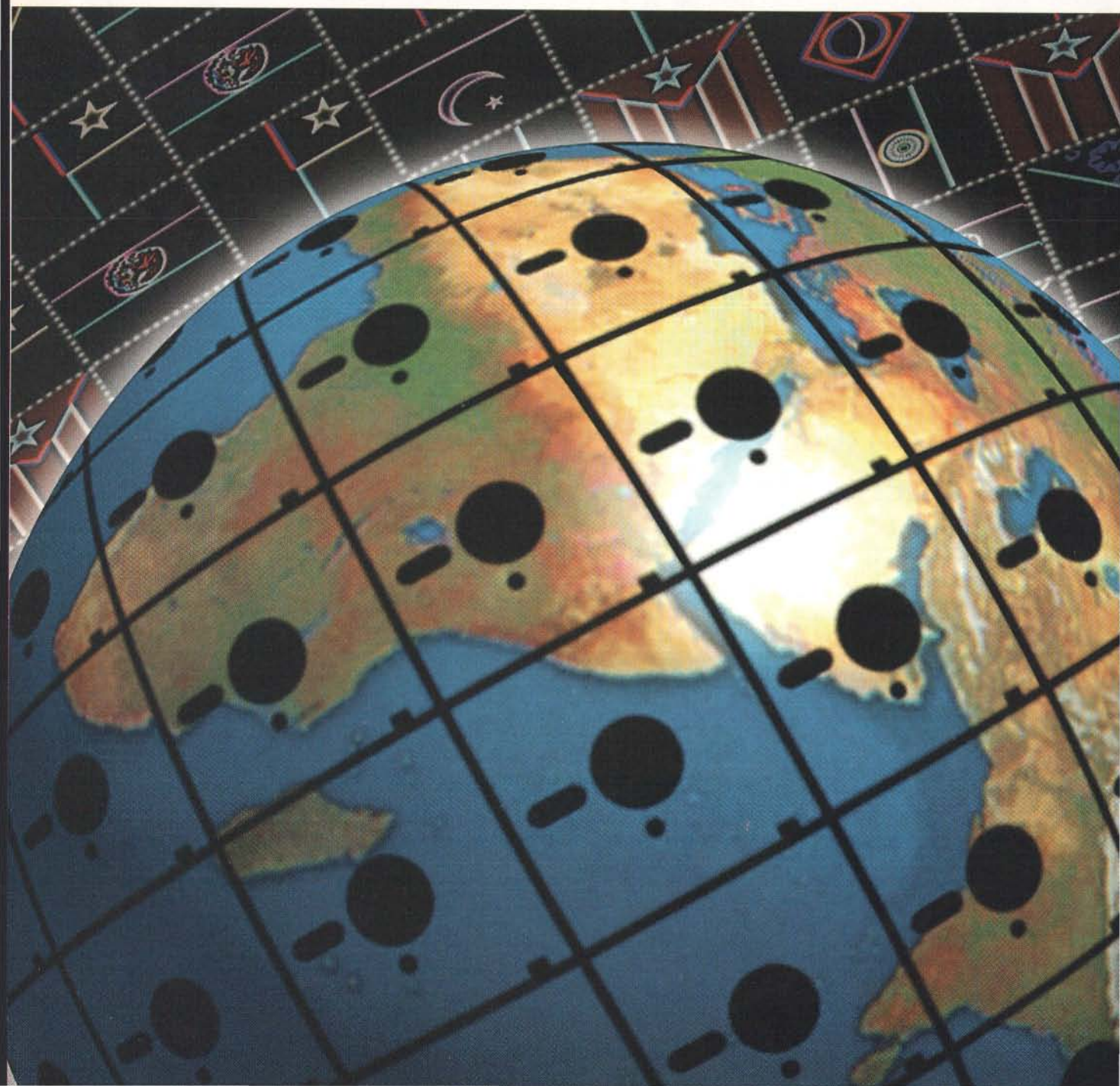


**State of the Art**

# SOFTWARE GOES GLOBAL

It's a brave new world for software development out there today—in fact, it's the whole world, producing and purchasing software

**RUSSELL KAY**





It's easy to think of software as primarily an American thing: Most of it has been created and sold here, and here is where its future lies. Wanna bet?

The fact is, software today is a global affair. By some estimates, over 150 million computers are scattered around the world, and at least a third of these are located outside the U.S. All these computers, including those overseas, need software; this is a huge need that someone is going to fill, and it's a market that major software developers cannot afford to ignore. So it's hardly surprising that U.S. software developers are scrambling for a piece of the international pie.

At the same time, foreign software developers are having an increasing impact on the U.S. market. As a BYTE reader, it's a safe bet that you use many software products. It's likely that some of those products originate from a foreign source or that they incorporate significant code or technology that overseas developers created.

International sales make up more than half of the revenues for the top 100 U.S. software companies, according to the SPA (Software Publishers Association). Microsoft, for example, reported that in 1992, over half—55 percent—of its \$3.2 billion revenues were earned outside the U.S. The SPA recently reported that in western Europe alone, 1993 sales of PC applications software amounted to \$1.8 billion. While this represents an 11 percent growth in monetary value over 1992, it also represents a remarkable 75 percent growth in the number of units sold (see the figure "Sales of Applications Software in Europe").

### The Cross-Cultural Blues

If you're developing software, you're familiar with having to design or implement for multiple hardware platforms and dif-

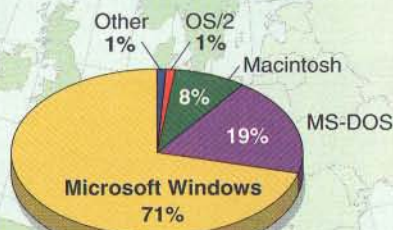
ferent operating systems. Now you're going to have to add yet a few more variables into the development mix. If you have any interest at all in the overseas markets—and you should—you need to consider how to modify your products to suit those foreign markets. As L. Chris Miller explains in "Transborder Tips and Traps," just taking care of the "mechanical" and top-level language differences is no simple task. Combine this with cultural differences (see "Crossing the Cultural Boundary"), and you begin to realize just how complex an undertaking it is to make software appealing and usable across international boundaries.

### Programmers Here, There, and Everywhere

Yet marketing packaged software is only part of the story. Increasingly, programmers outside the country are developing software—even for U.S. companies. At the moment, there are two primary offshore sources for programming talent. One is Southeast Asia, including India, Singapore, and the Philippines in particular. All have relatively large numbers of skilled programmers available at wage levels that seriously undercut the American norms. In "Developing Software Overseas," Edward Yourdon describes the ways that foreign software developers are gaining a foothold in the American market and are competing successfully against the international software giants in their home countries.

Another important source for foreign programming is the countries of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Russia, for example, has a pool of talent that, according to industry-observer Yourdon, is the equal of anything we can produce in the West. These folks are reportedly overjoyed to work for \$200 to \$300 per month,

### Sales of Applications Software in Europe (January–June 1993)



Source: Software Publishers Association

and they bring valuable contributions to the table. We ignore these programmers at our own peril.

Perhaps because the Russians were cut off from Western markets and practices for so long, perhaps because they have generally had to work on underpowered (by U.S. standards) equipment, or perhaps because they have a special talent for puzzle-thinking, Russian programmers seem to bring new insights and nontraditional ways of thinking to programming problems and models.

One small caveat may be in order. Americans shouldn't forget that a significant fraction of the world's computer viruses originated in eastern Europe, primarily Bulgaria and Russia. According to Vesselin Bontchev, a native Bulgarian and antivirus researcher at the University of Hamburg, Germany, these viruses were primarily the product of underemployed and undervalued programmers who found virus writing an interesting and amusing way to get back at the authorities. Let's hope that is behind them...and us.

### What's Ahead?

Given the growing importance of the international market, you can expect to see publishers and developers place added emphasis on adapting their products—particularly new products that can start from a clean design and coding slate—to multiple languages and use in foreign countries.

So there's a lot at stake and a great deal to consider when you think about software as a global resource. The rest of this state-of-the-art section examines some of those considerations, discussing just what the internationalization of software means to the end user, to the software designer and coder, and to the marketer and publisher. ■

*Russell Kay is a BYTE technical editor experienced in border crossings by virtue of having grown up on the Canada-U.S. border and later serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Brazil. You can reach him on the Internet or BIX as russellk@bix.com.*

### Transborder Tips and Traps

Making software for foreign markets takes more than translating a few menus ..... **93**

### Crossing the Cultural Boundary

Cultural factors have significant impact on software design ... **107**

### Developing Software Overseas

Software industries outside the U.S. are becoming increasingly competitive..... **113**





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# TRANSBORDER TIPS AND TRAPS

Creating or retrofitting software for another country requires attention to myriad technical details involving language, translation, and interface

L. CHRIS MILLER



**T**here is no doubt that the U.S. dominates the world's software production—75 percent of currently installed packaged software worldwide is produced in the U.S. International sales make up half the revenues for the top 100 U.S. software companies.

International sales were responsible for 55 percent of Microsoft's \$3.2 billion in revenues for fiscal year 1992. Ken Fowles, manager of global evangelism at Microsoft, reports that there is huge growth potential outside the U.S. for all Windows products. "Windows presently ships in 27 languages. All versions except Japanese will run using the U.S. version of DOS," he says. The Japanese version of Windows requires the Japanese version of DOS to support special hardware issues and incompatibilities specific to Japan.

The international software market is a multibillion dollar opportunity. The Software Publishers Association of Washington, D.C., reports that the four largest international markets for U.S. publishers are the U.K. and Ireland, Germany and Austria, France, and Japan. The U.S. has a 90 percent share of the U.K.'s \$1.5 billion software market.

## Definitions

Despite the continuing presence of American English versions of software products throughout the world, U.S. software publishers are responding to increasing international demand for software adapted for specific locales. The adaptation process is called *localization*, which is often abbreviated as *l10n*, because there are 10 letters between the letter *l* and the letter *n* in the word *localization*.

It takes a great deal of work to localize or retrofit a software package that was designed in American English to suit the requirements of another culture, language, or market. Some of the tasks involved in



localizing software include making code compatible with different formatting conventions; supporting local character sets; supporting local software and hardware; translating the interface (i.e., all screen displays visible to the end user, such as dialog boxes, prompts, menus, and error messages); translating all documentation (e.g., user manuals and warranty information); translating promotional literature, ad campaigns, and slogans; translating filenames; providing local customer service; and protecting product names and copyrights.

Localizing or retrofitting a product for another locale usually involves reengineering much of the underlying code. This is because software is not a static entity; it must act on data in accordance with the rules or conventions of a given locale. Reengineering the code for each locale is time-consuming and expensive.

Software companies are beginning to realize that tremendous savings and increased revenues are possible if the software is initially designed with features and code that are prepared to accept international conventions, foreign data, and format processing. Designing software that can provide the necessary support for the languages of the intended markets is called *internationalization*. Building internationalization (abbreviated as *i18n*) into a product minimizes or eliminates the need for engineering revisions and greatly simplifies the localization process.

Internationalization also reduces the time lags inherent in localizing software for multiple markets. Software developers have become sensitive to the issue of simultaneous release. Quark of Denver, Colorado, recently delayed the shipping date for its QuarkXPress 3.3 desktop publishing program to avoid compatibility problems for end users transferring files from U.S. companies to overseas offices. Multinational companies sharing files can appreciate this gesture. Another advantage to the simultaneous release of software in world markets is that it allows coordinated marketing campaigns.

## Internationalization Approaches

Software developers generally use one of three approaches to isolate and protect the core algorithms:

**Compile-Time Internationalization.** Programmers change the files that contain the source code and algorithms.

**Link-Time Internationalization.** Programmers extract all the text strings, along with

## Levels of Internationalization

In his book *Solaris Internationalization Guide: Global Product Design* (Prentice-Hall, 1992), author Bill Tuthill characterizes software according to its level of internationalization on the following scale:

**Level 1**—Software with texts and code sets that are adaptable internationally or are considered "8-bit clean" and that support the Latin-1 code set.

**Level 2**—Software with formatting and collation methods that are locale-sensitive. Includes sorting order for alphabets and formats for date, time, and so on.

**Level 3**—Software that allows easy translation of user-visible text, usually by placing such text into a separate file from the executable code.

**Level 4**—Software that supports East Asian languages, which frequently require multibyte code sets.

algorithms that are dependent on language or culture, from the program code.

**Run-Time Internationalization.** End users select locale. The software contains text files for more than one locale.

One interesting example of this last approach is embodied in Compaq Computer's Presario line of computers. The first time you boot up one of these systems, it asks you to choose the language you want to work in. However, if you inadvertently select the wrong one, you may be in trouble: The system automatically erases all supporting files for other languages. These files are the normal MS-DOS and Windows language-support files and could be easily restored from the distribution floppy disks, but Compaq doesn't supply the floppy disks with the machines.

## Alphabet/Character Encoding and Unicode

Every language has its own alphabet or script; thus, alphabet or character encoding is fundamental to internationalizing software. Early computer standards for alphabet or script encoding made no provision for all the written languages of the world. Since computers manipulate numbers, text must be represented to the computer as a series of numbers, each number corresponding to a graphical representation of a character or glyph.

The most common coded character set is the ASCII 7-bit code set. ASCII supports 128 characters—52 uppercase and lowercase letters in the Roman alphabet and 10

numbers, as well as symbols, punctuation, a limited number of accents, and control codes. ASCII, one of the first code sets invented, was designed to support American English. Other coded character sets were created to support other languages.

Extended ASCII includes accented vowels like á and special characters such as the German ß. Windows uses a superset of the ANSI character set, essentially ISO 8859/x plus additional characters. The Latin-1 code set uses 8 bits (1 byte) to represent a character, which allows the representation of 256 characters.

Non-Roman languages with more than 256 characters use doublebyte, multibyte, or wide character sets. A doublebyte character uses 16 bits. A multibyte character set can mix single- and multibyte characters. A wide character set typically contains 16- or 32-bit characters.

Code sets differ across operating systems and language scripts. The best-known attempt to consolidate code sets is the Unicode standard. This character code standard, capable of encoding all known written languages, is being touted as the answer to efficient data portability among platforms. The Unicode Consortium, a nonprofit organization in Mountain View, California, was founded in 1991 to develop and promote the use of the Unicode standard. Charter members include Apple, Xerox, IBM, Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, and Novell. The ISO, based in Geneva, Switzerland, approved Unicode in June 1992 as the international character-encoding standard (ISO 10646).

Unicode is a 16-bit code set that can produce more than 65,536 characters. Of these, 34,168 places are defined for most characters used in writing systems, about 6300 places are reserved for software and hardware developers to assign their own characters and symbols, and 25,000 places are available for expansion. With Unicode, each character is allocated a unique 16-bit value or number. Each 16-bit number is called a *code point*.

Using the Unicode standard eliminates the need for complex modes or escape codes to specify modified characters or special cases. Another advantage is that Unicode has built-in special control characters for handling changes in text direction within a single line of text.

The increasing list of software products implementing Unicode is promising. Yet the cost of converting preexisting software to Unicode-compliant status is still prohibitive for several software developers.

*continued*



# STATISTICA/w

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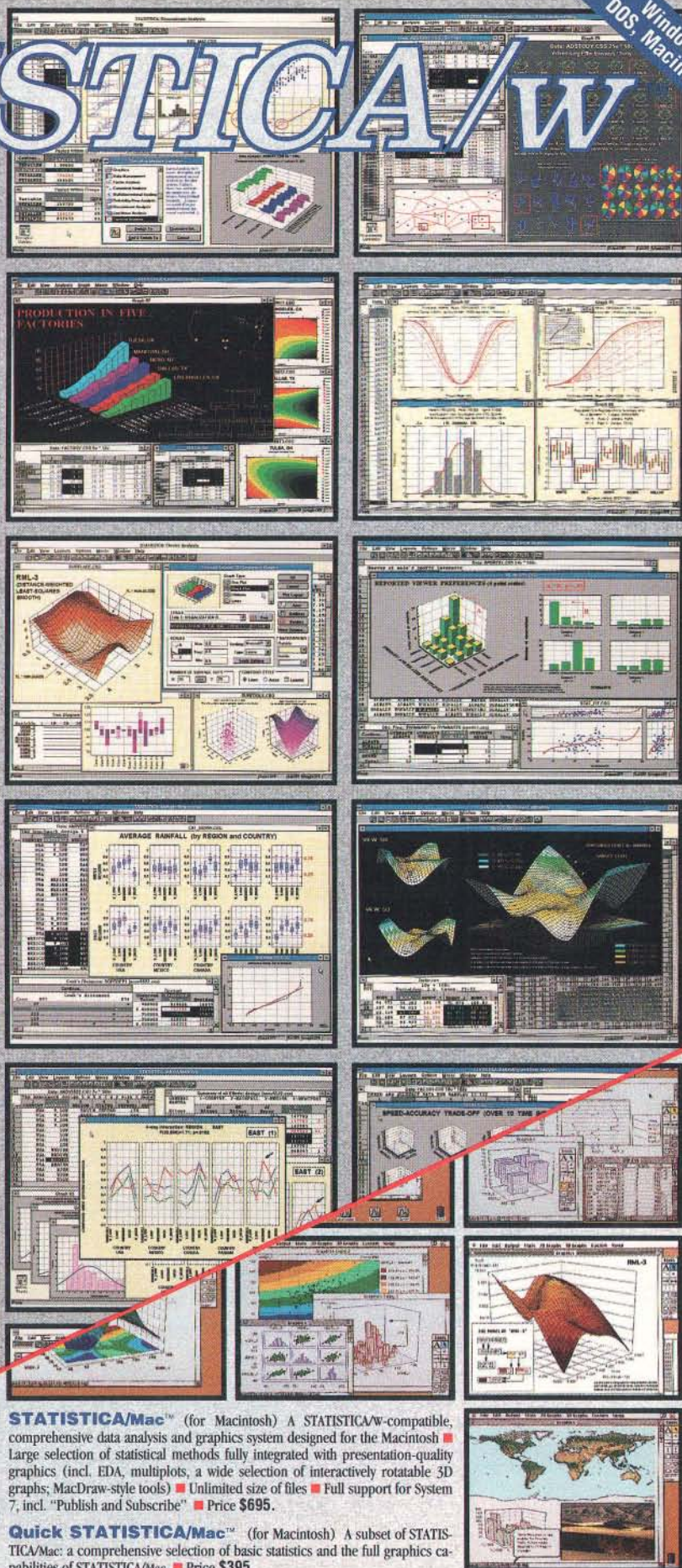


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## Observing the Conventions

A considerable variety of typographic and local-usage differences have to do with the way people in different parts of the world use and express numbers, dates, quantities, symbols, and punctuation. The following short list shows some of the important conventions and format differences that you should be aware of:



**Dates.** May 12, 1959, would be written as 5/12/59 in the U.K., 12/5/59 in Denmark, and 1959-05-12 in Sweden.

**Calendars.** Most countries use the familiar Gregorian calendar. Israel uses the Gregorian and Hebrew calendars, while Arab countries use the Gregorian and Islamic calendars. In Japan, years can be counted by the Gregorian calendar or by the Japanese imperial era. Conversion options are included in localized software.

**Time.** A time denoted as 8:32 p.m. in the U.S. would be 20:32 in Canada, 20.32.00 in Switzerland, 20.32 Uhr in Germany, and KI 20.32 in Norway.

**Numbers and Number Symbols.** The U.S. uses a decimal point and separates thousands with a comma. Other countries use a decimal comma and a period, apostrophe, or blank space for the thousands separator. Thus 3,912.45 can become 3.912,45 or 3 912,45. Words used to express numerical quantities can have different meanings, too: A billion refers to a 1 followed by nine zeros in the U.S., while in Latin America and Europe, it refers to a 1 followed by 12 zeros. Therefore, a BBC announcer says "one-thousand-million dollars" where an American would say "one billion dollars." In Japan, software should support kanji, katakana, and Maru-uji (i.e., numbers in a circle), as well as the usual Arabic numerals.

**Counting Currency.** U.S. currency written as \$2,456.78 is 2.456,78 DM in Germany and 2.456\$78Esc. in Portugal. Also, don't forget the special characters needed for currency, such as the British pound (£) and the Japanese yen (¥).

**Measurement Scales.** Outside the U.S.—even just over the Canadian border—most countries use the metric system. Distances are expressed in kilometers instead of miles and in centimeters instead of inches.

**Temperature.** As with other metric-system units, references to temperature in most of the world are expressed in degrees Celsius, not Fahrenheit.

**Paper Sizes.** U.S. paper standards are letter, legal, and ledger. Almost everywhere else, the standards are A3, A4, and A5. Japanese paper sizes are JIS-B4 and JIS-B5.

**Address Format.** Americans generally place the house number before the street name. Most Latin Americans and Europeans write the street name first.

**Punctuation.** In Greek, interrogation is expressed not by our American English question mark but by what looks like our semicolon (;). Other punctuation marks include ¡ and ¿ in Spanish and « » for quotation marks in Greek and French.

**Colors.** Americans automatically associate red with "stop" and green with "go"; the Chinese do not.

**Translation of Icons.** Images do not always translate the way you expect. Apple's Trashcan icon, for example, looked like a postal box to British Macintosh users. Religious icons and hand gestures should be avoided, as they may have culturally insensitive meanings in a number of countries. If you use book icons, be sure they open in the proper direction for the target market.

### The Input Problem

So the software can deal with different character sets. But how do you get them into the computer? Keyboard drivers and mapping tables for a variety of code sets can contend with European and Asian languages. For example, French keyboards

use an AZERTY keyboard rather than the QWERTY layout (the French just switched Q and W with A and Z).

Asian languages present the biggest challenge: entering non-Roman characters. The People's Republic of China's Hanzi ideographic script has over 7000 commonly used characters. (An ideographic character script uses pictures or symbols to depict a thing or an idea.) Taiwan's standards require 13,000 characters. The Windows 3.1 version for Taiwan supports six different input methods:

- **Chang Jei**—based on a public domain input method. Chinese characters are separated into two or more parts, or *radicals*. A radical is a part of a Chinese character that you can use to index the character; a character may contain more than one radical, but you can use only one of these as the indexing radical. These radicals are assigned to the keyboard letters *a* through *w* and *y*. The letter *x* is reserved for complex radicals, and *z* is used for selecting a duplicate word. Up to five keystrokes may be necessary to generate a single Chinese character.
- **Phonetic**—based on a phonetic alphabet (four different keyboard layouts are used). The keyboard includes 37 symbols representing consonants and semi-vowels and five for audible tones.
- **Quick/simplified**—a variation on the Chang Jei method.
- **Internal code**—based on the Big-5 internal code, which is an unofficial code page used in Taiwan that contains about 13,000 characters; this is enough for everyday business use but omits many classical Chinese characters.
- **DA-YI**—uses 40 defined basic radicals for character composition. This is currently the fastest input method found in Taiwan.
- **Array**—10 defined basic keystrokes (numbered 0 through 9). The keyboard is used as a matrix, and the number of basic keystrokes is the index of the matrix. Each Array radical on the keyboard is determined by the first stroke and the last stroke of the radical (i.e., the row index and the column index determine the radical on the matrix of the keyboard).

Software for Japan must support three distinct writing scripts. Text typically contains an average of 55 percent hiragana, 35 percent kanji, and 10 percent katakana.

*continued*

Another problem area is program size—if every stored character is 2 bytes long, the software may require a significant amount of additional memory just to run. Thus, for a variety of reasons, it will be some time before international character encoding is standardized across platforms.





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Hiragana uses 46 Japanese symbols (cursive script rather than block letter form) to represent all sound combinations. Kanji refers to more than 7000 Japanese ideographs based on Chinese characters. You can select one of two popular methods for inputting kanji characters: You can enter the hexadecimal representation corresponding to the character, or you can use a katakana-to-kanji conversion. If you type the phonetic spelling of the character, then the phonetic string is translated into the most-likely kanji character. A good converter should select the right choice about 80 percent of the time. When the translation is incorrect, you're presented with phonetically similar ideographs to select from. Katakana consists of 64 phonetic script characters and punctuation, used typically for foreign words. (Note: Hiragana and katakana together are often referred to as *kana*.) In addition, Arabic numerals and Roman letters are occasionally used in Japan for phonetic spelling of foreign words (these are called *romaji*).

A "real" Japanese keyboard commonly

has 106 keys (versus 101 for typical U.S. keyboards). The extra keys are for toggling the Windows Input Method Editor, katakana-kanji conversion, and so on. On a U.S. keyboard, these functions are accessed by other key combinations.

Keyboard entry for Asian languages is understandably slow and tedious. Pen technology and handwriting recognition are being explored as possible solutions. There are already six pen-based Chinese character-recognition input devices available for Chinese Windows. Yet some ideographic characters are quite elaborate and require 12 pen strokes. Penkey (Orem, UT) sells a trainable print- and cursive-recognition system called Savant 2.0 that can handle many languages if the fonts are provided. Fonts for ANSI/Latin-1 languages and Japanese katakana and kanji come standard. The Savant 2.0 universal handwriting-recognition system includes built-in Unicode, JIS (Japan Industrial Standard), and ASCII switching.

In the future, voice-recognition technology will probably solve the laborious

task of entering Asian languages via a keyboard. Dialects such as Mandarin (with 37 basic sounds, each with four possible inflections) are distinctly and carefully pronounced. Voice-recognition software is already dealing with intonation, pitch, inflection, stress, and pauses. The end user can modify pronunciation rules and exception dictionaries.

### Fonts

Arabic is a calligraphic cursive script with 28 alphabets, 10 numerals, and several special alphanumeric characters. Each Arabic letter has up to four possible shapes based on its position in a word: isolate, initial, medial, and final (i.e., alone, first, middle, and last). The software is expected to analyze the letter's position in a word and change the letter shape accordingly. About 250 characters are necessary to produce good-quality text. A DTP (desktop publishing) program might include up to 900 characters. One interesting feature of Arabic is that, while you are typing, previously entered letters will be changing shape.



**Scott Meyer, XVT-Power++ Application Framework Software Developer.**



# State of the Art Transborder Tips and Traps

## Sorting Sequences

Computer software for international markets must be able to implement various sorting algorithms. Each locale has its own sorting-order preference for uppercase and lowercase letters, double characters, accented vowels versus nonaccented vowels, and numerals.

In the U.S., for example, the sorting preference is from *a* to *z*; but in Denmark, there are letters after *z*. In Latin America, the double character *ch* is treated as a single character and is placed after *c* and before *d*. In Germany, *ö* sorts with the letter *o*; however, in Sweden, *ö* is the last letter of the alphabet.

## Writing Direction

Most Western languages are written in a Roman script horizontally from left to right and continue this pattern from top to bottom. Arabic and Hebrew characters are written horizontally from right to left, from top to bottom—but with numerals going from left to right on the same line. Traditional Japanese characters were written

vertically from top to bottom, from left to right. The Japanese language is now also written horizontally from left to right.

## Interfaces and Menus

You must allow enough space for text expansion when translating from English into another language. The Microsoft Windows SDK (Software Development Kit) recommends allowing 200 percent extra space for 1 to 10 English characters, 100 percent extra space for 11 to 20 English characters, and 30 percent extra space for 71 or more English characters. For example, the Preferences selection from the Windows menu would translate as *Bildschirmstellungen* in German. Boxes containing text should be self-sizing and movable.

Remember that software may not run (or run properly) if text files do not strictly meet certain technical requirements, such as character-length restrictions, string files, line links, command prompts, and other source code variables. Internal calls to related files will fail if you change filenames. Terminology consistency is crucial,

since there can be hundreds of cross-references between the interface, the documentation, the text files, and the filenames.

## Translating Documentation

Special care must be taken with documentation translation. William Saiff, a technical writer in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, found an overwhelming need for guidelines to aid in the translation of technical and marketing materials. "Anything you do to make your information as clear and simple as possible promotes easier translation," he advises. "Avoid using English words with multiple meanings. For example, use *because* instead of *since*. *Because* has a single meaning; *since* can be confusing for a translator."

Terminology used in documentation should correspond to terminology in the software. Creating glossaries is important for maintaining consistent terminology. Microsoft publishes the *GUI Guide—International Terminology for the Windows Interface*, which includes standard translations for 14 European languages.

*continued*

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# State of the Art Transborder Tips and Traps

## Translation of Text Strings

Leave room on the disks or plan for extra disks to accommodate the increased length due to text expansion when translating from English into many non-English languages. File sizes of localized software will often be larger than the original English files. Also, be careful that file compression and decompression routines work properly with extended characters.

## Translation and Terminology Tools

Many translation and terminology tools can accelerate the localization process. GlobalWare (Los Angeles, CA) offers three products for managing the translation process. These tools extract text from source code, formatting and hypertext codes, and document files. The translated text is then automatically returned to the correct locations in the source file.

XL8 Code extracts text from programming code (e.g., C, C++, Windows resource files, Macintosh resource files, Lisp, and Pascal) by using filters or code-definition files. You can select the platform (e.g., Unix, DOS, Windows, Next, or OS/2) and the character-code page. XL8 Help processes Windows help files, while XL8 Text processes document files. Two important features are included in the three XL8 products: The glossary tool set lets you create a glossary and attach it to a file, and the leverage feature applies previous translations to the current file.

MCB Systems (San Diego, CA) markets the respected Trados line of translation tools. The Trados Translator's Workbench II is a translation editor that simultaneously accesses two databases: a terminology database, used to build custom glossaries, and a translation memory database that stores entire sentences as they are translated. This approach uses fuzzy logic to access previously translated terms and sentences, helping language professionals translate more efficiently and consistently. A *tag recognition* feature lets you localize files from various DTP programs, as well as from Windows Help and resource files. The Trados Translator's Workbench for Windows, expected later this year, will add a memory functionality to Word for Windows and WordPerfect for Windows.

## WorldScript

Apple's WorldScript technology provides built-in enabling for most written languages. WorldScript was released as part of the System 7.1 operating system for the Macintosh in October 1992.

System-software support for language scripts is streamlined with WorldScript. Each language script affects components such as character encoding, keyboard layout, input methods, sorting, formats, and fonts. Tables in the system resources specify script behavior, while WorldScript I and WorldScript II extensions do the processing. WorldScript eliminates independent development for scripts. Routines for 1-byte languages are included with WorldScript I. WorldScript II extensions provide routines for 2-byte languages. Support is included for right-to-left scripts, vertical scripts, in-line conversion, and third-party front-end processors.

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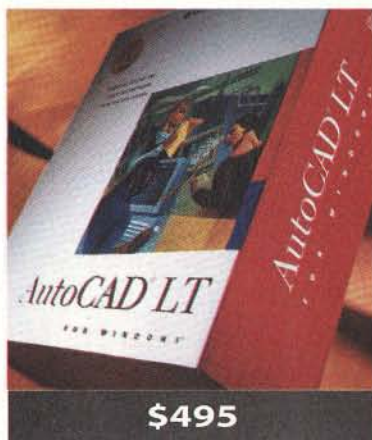
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## State of the Art Transborder Tips and Traps

system. Mac applications can be quickly localized, even for non-Roman languages. Apple intends to support Unicode in future releases of its system software.

### Multilingual Software

The software industry is looking toward creating software designed to serve several markets without the need for localization. Such software is sometimes referred to as *multilingual software*. An early example was the 8/24 GC graphics card driver developed at Apple. The driver included all the strings needed for 14 languages in a single piece of software, automatically configuring itself for the language of the user by checking for the language in which the operating system was running.

Gamma Productions (Santa Monica, CA) offers a complete Unicode-compliant multilingual word processing and font system for over 100 languages. Universe for Windows 1.04 permits mixing any combination of languages supported. It is even possible to mix vertical and horizontal scripts (e.g., Chinese and English) with

correct rotation of characters and punctuation. Checking the spelling of multiple languages is possible in one pass.

### Tools to Support Software Migration

The Gamma Server for Unicode is a 32-bit DLL that provides a systemwide set of resources for integrating multilingual processing in any Windows 3.1 or NT application for single-byte and dual-byte languages specified by Unicode. By using Gamma's API, an application can access a host of language-based services, including a wide variety of keyboard layouts; methods for converting user input to Unicode data; text services for determining character properties, contextual analysis, ligatures and font mappings; plus spelling checker, hyphenation, and thesaurus support.

*Multilingual Computing Magazine and Buyer's Guide* (Sandpoint, ID) offers information on the technical aspects of internationalization. The magazine covers new technologies, services for companies interested in localization, reviews of software tools and publications, and a calendar

of events. Also, it has an extensive list of multilingual computing products.

The promise of expanding international markets with generally higher profit margins is motivating U.S. software developers to internationalize or localize their products. Developers considering foreign markets need to know that much more than translation is involved. Two excellent reference books that offer detailed overviews are *Global Software: Developing Applications for the International Market* by Dave Taylor (Springer-Verlag, 1992) and *Software Internationalization and Localization: An Introduction* by Emmanuel Uren, Robert Howard, and Tiziana Perinotti (Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1993). U.S. software companies will continue to maintain or gain a competitive advantage by adapting their products to meet the unique requirements of foreign countries. ■

*L. Chris Miller, a computer consultant in Washington, D.C., has been involved in machine translation and software localization for many years. You can reach her on the Internet at 70303.314@compuserve.com or on BIX c/o "editors."*

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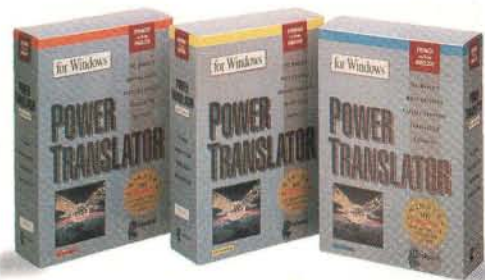
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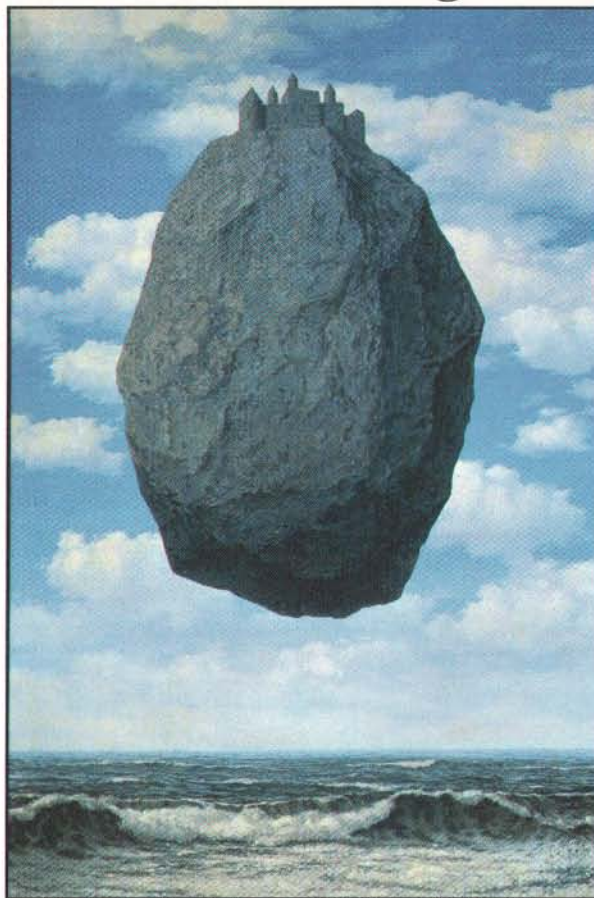


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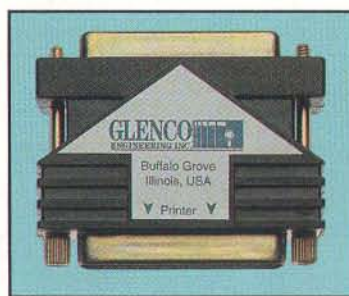
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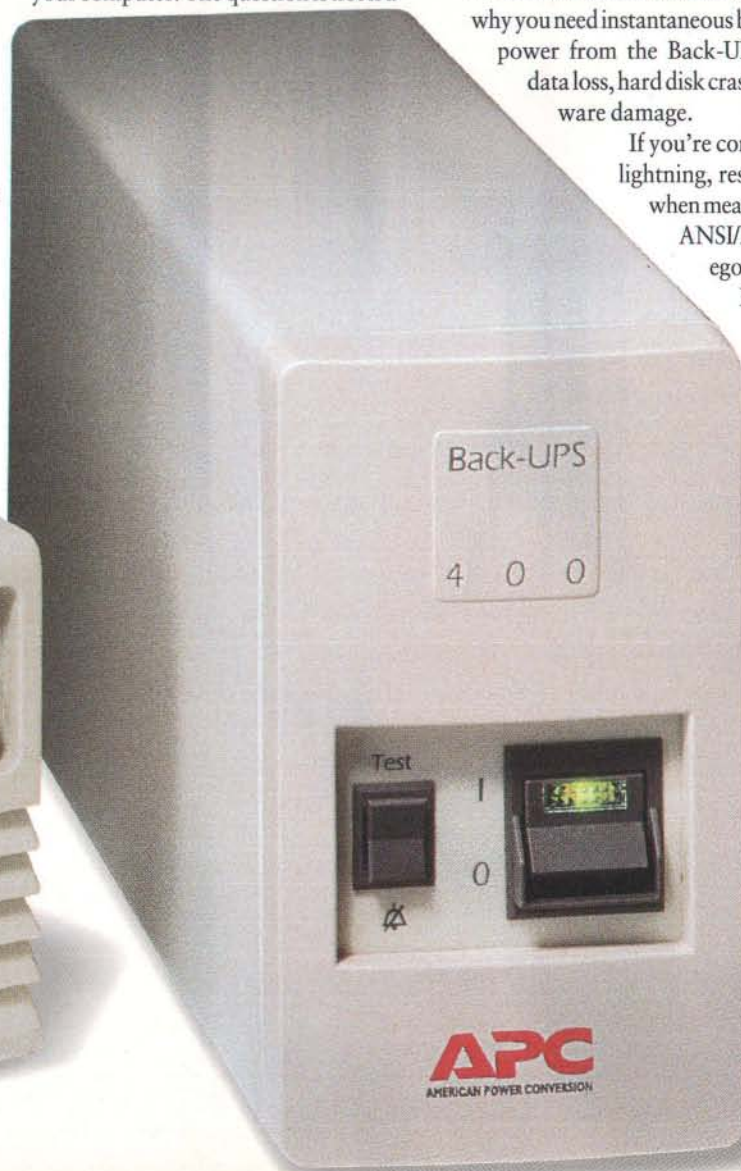
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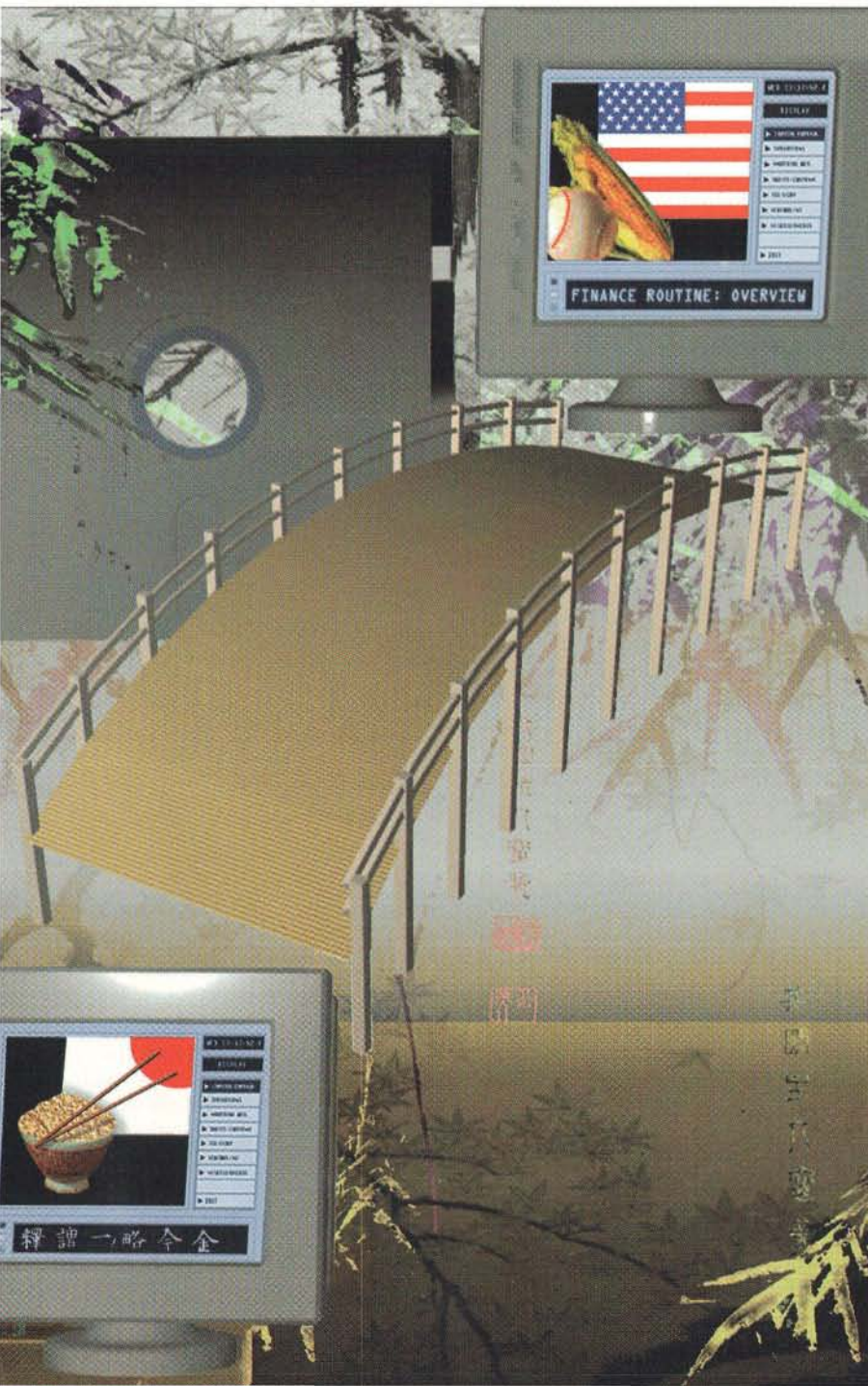
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# CROSSING THE CULTURAL BOUNDARY

Designing software for a different culture calls for an awareness of its subtleties and unwritten assumptions. Japan is a case in point.

KUMIYO NAKAKOJI



Suppose you're a software developer with a groupware product that you have successfully marketed in the U.S. Now, you are about to introduce it to the Japanese market, and you have done your international-trade homework. You have solved complicated legal issues and determined that there are no competitive products available in Japan yet. You have embedded a kana-kanji conversion package into your package's interface and rewritten your system to deal with 2-byte character sets. You enlarged the size of the product's text window by shrinking menu bars on the display, because they would need twice as much data due to the 2-byte code. You hired a professional translator to translate system help messages, the user's manual, and other documentation into Japanese.

Yet in spite of all this careful preparation, there is still considerable potential for failure, almost none of it easy to foresee without taking extraordinary measures. This article points out some of the hidden assumptions and built-in misunderstandings that must be ironed out when taking a software system across a cultural border. The examples focus on differences between the American and Japanese cultures, but striking differences can exist for many other cultural pairs.

First, the people who translate the manuals have very little knowledge of or user experience with groupware tools; the resulting manuals are difficult for foreign speakers to understand. Special terms may be literally or inadequately translated—it would not be unusual for *groupware* to be translated into “a device for a crowd”; the appropriate translation in Japanese is the same word, *groupware*, spelled out phonetically in kana characters. For a long time, Americans poked fun at the awkward locutions of “Japanglish” once found in manuals for consumer-electronic equipment; the lesson should be clear for those wishing to translate in the opposite direction.

*continued*



# State of the Art Crossing the Cultural Boundary

The idea of freely typing opinions into your groupware system on-the-fly during a meeting in Japan would not work because converting kana characters (which can be input by using a conventional Latin-alphabet keyboard) into kanji is a very tedious task. By the time you finish typing a Japanese sentence, the topic is probably not being discussed any more. Also, you should not have sacrificed the menu-bar space for the text window because Japanese expressions are, in general, much more concise than English ones. A typical paragraph translated into Japanese takes only 60 percent to 70 percent of the space used by English.

Finally, and perhaps the most important difference of all, the role and concept of a meeting is totally different in Japanese business. Brainstorming discussions are held after work, often in a social setting over drinks. Negotiations must be done prior to the meeting. During the actual meeting time at the workplace, people just agree with whatever their managers describe and propose. It is considered socially unacceptable to challenge your manager's ideas in public. In summary, there is no point in using your groupware tool to record decisions made during a meeting. Indeed, there may be no point in using your product at all in the Japanese setting.

To deal with these difficulties, guidelines and checklists have been proposed for introducing systems into other cultures and adjusting surface-level interface designs, including text and formats of numbers, dates, and time. Interface designers should also be aware that different cultures have different connotations of images, symbols, and colors, and may require quite different mappings between the logical flow of ideas and the physical flow of objects on the screen (see reference 1). See "Transborder Tips and Traps" on page 93 for discussion of some of these factors.

## Underlying, Unwritten Assumptions

However, such surface-level adjustment is not enough. The introduction of software to a new culture brings to light many hidden and unpredictable factors. A sys-

tem's functionality is often unconsciously affected by underlying traditions of the culture in which the system is designed.

For example, many of the fundamental concepts used in Western-language word processors—such notions as cursors, tabs, and margins—stem from the typewriter culture. The typical user of a Japanese

word processor has had little exposure to the typewriter, because BC (before computer) documents were formatted using writing pads that typically used a 20-by-20 grid for each character. To judge the length of a document in Japanese, we count characters instead of words. Given this background, Japanese users have had a considerable amount of trouble understanding the concepts of cursor movement embodied in a typical word processor application.

Reasoning processes and perceptions toward computer tools also vary from culture to culture. Ger-

manic people prefer precise queries, whereas Latin people prefer browsing. A trial-and-error method is perceived as tedious and time-consuming in Japan, whereas some cultures associate the method with freedom and exploration, giving it positive connotations. American users view CASE tools as drawing and writing tools, whereas European users view CASE products as analysis tools. These factors should be taken into account in designing the functionality of a system, as well as in development processes, marketing, and installation of the system.

## Resources

One research effort addressing cross-cultural considerations in human-computer interaction design is exemplified in two recent workshops in cross-cultural perspectives on human-computer interaction held in association with CHI (Human Factors in Computer Systems) conferences. The first workshop, held in Monterey, California, in 1992, explored how the science and practice of human-computer interaction research can support people working together by effectively dealing with and possibly taking advantage of the diversity of their professional and cultural back-

grounds (see reference 2). The second workshop was held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, in 1993 to further develop a conceptual map of the cross-cultural perspectives on human-computer interaction and to identify guidelines for developing cross-cultural design artifacts (see reference 3).

## Modeling Cultural Differences

During the second workshop, participants discussed a model (based on Trompenaars' model introduced by David Gee of the East London Business School) to characterize cultural differences more systematically. The model includes six different aspects, many representing a polarity or a spectrum of behaviors and assumptions. Each of these aspects has significant implications for interface design.

**Time Perception.** In some cultures, people prefer processing jobs in parallel, while in other cultures, the preference is for sequential operation. People's attitudes toward patience is another issue. In some cultures, fast service is important and considered a sign of efficiency; in others, people may prefer friendly but slow service, feeling that fast service is cold and rude.

**Individualism vs. Collective Action.** Some cultures value teamwork, while others value individualism.

**Procedural vs. Declarative.** In Western culture, people tend to prefer descriptions written in a declarative manner, while in Oriental and Russian cultures, people prefer descriptions to be written in a procedural manner. For example, a paragraph in English often begins with a summary sentence, followed by auxiliary reasoning. In Japanese, however, a summary sentence usually comes only at the end of each paragraph, following step-by-step reasoning. These different writing styles should be taken into account in designing help messages and on-line manuals, as well as marketing and advertising material.

**Universalistic vs. Particularistic.** Some cultures value uniformity and want to have a uniform, global mechanism for performing multiple tasks. Others value particularism and prefer to have a different system specifically tailored to each task.

**Internal Control vs. External Control.** In Western cultures, individuals want to have control over their own environment (e.g., Western

Many of the fundamental concepts used in Western-language word processors—such notions as cursors, tabs, and margins—stem from the typewriter culture. But the typical user of a Japanese word processor has had little or no exposure to the typewriter.





medicine tries to conquer an illness). In the Oriental culture, on the other hand, individuals try to harmonize with the existing environment by gradually adapting to it (e.g., Oriental medicine tries to compromise and harmonize with nature). Such characteristics determine whether users like to have active or passive control in the human-computer interaction.

**Communication Overlaps.** When two people communicate, the interaction between them and the way they take turns depends on their language and culture. In many Western languages, the two parties take turns, alternating back and forth. In Asian languages, the parties also alternate, but each alternation is followed by a brief pause. In Latin languages, the two sides of the conversation are likely to overlap, so that one interferes with the other. This may need to be taken into account when considering human-computer interaction as communication.

Although this list is not exhaustive, consideration of these aspects can help software designers to internationalize their systems.

### Crossing the Barriers

With such a model as a framework, the challenge is how to identify and understand those characteristics. This challenge raises issues discussed in the first cross-cultural workshop mentioned above: You have to work with people from different cultures. Communicating with people from different cultures is much harder than expected. Not only are there language barriers but also the lack of mutually understood social norms, background, and context require time, effort, and patience to establish a shared understanding. For example, if Japanese test users said they liked your system, would you know whether they were telling the truth or just being too polite to make negative comments about the system?

Talking to people who know both cultures (e.g., a Japanese person who has lived in the West for a number of years) would be helpful, but it is also important to note that such a person represents, in fact, yet another culture: a culture on a boundary. Such a person may have slightly different value-judgment and reasoning schemes from foreign users who have not lived in other cultures.

In addition to nationalities, you can characterize culture by differences in language, race, age, gender, or geographical

region. Also, the introduction of computer systems creates additional new cultures: Consider the differences in what is expected of a computer interface between a Macintosh user and a Unix user. Different disciplines, different expertise levels, and different roles in the workplace (e.g., managers, developers, and end users) each form their own culture. And each of these cultures is "not explicit but implicit, hidden behind or in the various artifacts, symbols, work routines, and established patterns of cooperation" (see reference 4). These considerations make you believe that adjusting your system to a culture by changing only surface-level issues will not work.

To successfully introduce your software system to a different culture, you first need to familiarize yourself with the target culture, and then you should design what amounts to a completely new system for that culture. Obviously, you want to identify reusable components from the original system and retain as many as possible, but you must recognize that some major changes may be needed before you build it. Most important, keep an open mind—you will probably learn a lot about both the culture and your system after you introduce the system into the culture and get feedback from local users. ■

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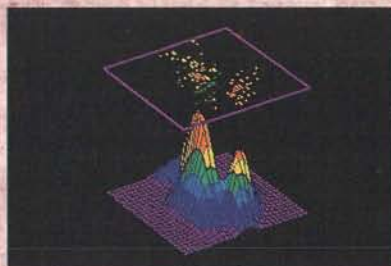
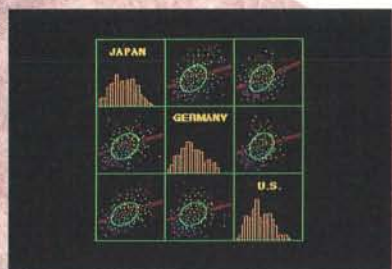
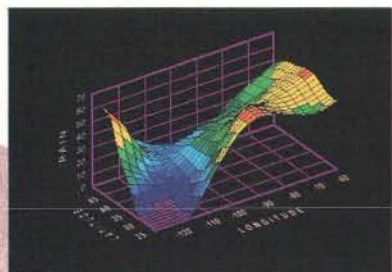
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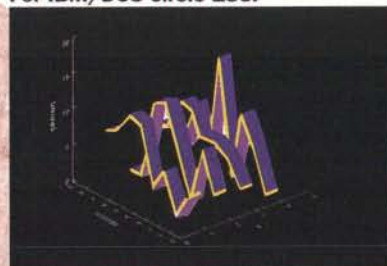
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# DEVELOPING SOFTWARE OVERSEAS

Around the world, local developers are creating software that's as good as or better than anything being made in the U.S. Here's a look at the way the offshore software industry is growing.

EDWARD YOURDON



About six years ago, I began warning people that the American software industry was likely to face increasing competition from developing nations. That warning has been borne out. Offshore software producers are grabbing a noticeable chunk of the global software pie. While the U.S. still dominates the industry, over the next few years, you can expect an increased presence of non-U.S.-made software in both domestic and international markets. And a number of these products will come not from the industrialized nations of western Europe but from third-world developing countries. The leaders in this movement will be countries such as India, Singapore, the Philippines, and Russia, where labor costs are low, and skilled programmers are abundant (see the text box "Quality: The Hidden Offshore Advantage").

We can expect the world's developing countries in particular to take a clear path with regard to software development. This path has four distinct stages, and each stage offers some interesting opportunities.

## Stage 1: Live-in Contract Programmers

At first, teams of third-world programmers will be knocking on doors, offering to develop software with teams located at the customer's local site. The primary advantage to this approach is low price. Even with the overhead of travel, lodging, and administrative expenses, the client often finds that he or she is paying only half the cost of a comparable American work force. In some cases, cost is not as important as availability. If the project involves a "hot" technology (e.g., using Visual Basic for a client/server application), it may be difficult for the client to find available talent in the normal labor pool. There is also the issue of stability: The "body shops" that provide offshore programmers often argue that their people are less likely to quit and take another job in the middle of a critical project.

*continued*



## Quality: The Hidden Offshore Advantage

American programmers are grappling with 20-year-old legacy systems that were estimated at 81 billion lines of COBOL a few years ago. The programmer from India has no such problems. Our industry is now saddled with hundreds of thousands of programmers who know COBOL but not C++, MVS but not Unix, and structured design but not object-oriented design.

I should emphasize that programmers from India, Singapore, or China are usually just as well educated as their counterparts in Silicon Valley. The university computer-science curriculum is adequate in many developing countries—and if it's not, students simply go to advanced countries for their education. Indeed, approximately 50 percent of the graduate-level computer-science students in the U.S. today are foreign nationals. Most of these students learn English as a second language and can read the latest computer literature with ease.

Thus, the best software teams in the developing countries are just as good as the best software teams in Germany, France, and the U.S. For example, the Software Engineering Institute, an American research organization, rates the capability of a software organization to consistently produce high-quality software at specific levels ranging from 1 to 5. Approximately 80 percent of U.S. and European organizations are at level 1, which is the bottom of the scale, 10 percent are at level 2, and a small percentage are at level 3. Only a handful of organizations are at level 4 or 5. According to a report in *The New York Times* (December 29, 1993), a Motorola software team in Bangalore, India, was recently given a level 5 assessment; what makes this particularly interesting is that no other Motorola software group, anywhere in the world, has yet achieved this rating. See the text box "Software Process Maturity Scale."

Most of the problems associated with the first stage of development within the software industry are obvious: The overhead expenses reduce the competitive advantage of lower salaries, without providing any benefit to the client or the software vendor. Visas and work permits can involve enormous red tape, and the delays may be unacceptable to a client with a tight deadline. Language problems, cultural differences, and the difficulty of trying to maintain a life-style comparable to the higher-paid U.S. colleagues with whom the foreign programmer is working—all these are obvious but predictable problems. Similarly, the client will often express strong hesitation about hiring a foreign programmer without an on-site interview; this poses a financial risk for either the overseas vendor or the client, depending on who pays the travel costs.

A more subtle problem involves the "brain drain" from the foreign country. In the long run, perhaps the U.S. should rejoice in the fact that its software industry is becoming a "melting pot," just as its manufacturing industries did throughout the nineteenth century. But national planners in the developing countries are very concerned: They are losing their best and brightest minds, because many of the programmers who go to the U.S. for a software

project never come home. (Ironically, one government study in the Philippines actually encouraged this practice, because expatriate workers typically send home a steady stream of cash to their relatives. This was judged to be a more effective way of bringing hard currency into the country than such traditional mechanisms as building a factory.)

### Stage 2: On-site Analysis, Offshore Code

The second stage involves having a small group of systems analysts who will work with the customer, on-site, to define the system requirements, which they then transmit back to programmers in the home country. Most of the first-stage offshore players are planning to move in this di-

rection. Using a small number of on-site analysts saves considerable transportation and overhead costs. Having home-country software engineers implement the design also minimizes the brain-drain problem and allows the offshore software firm to begin building its own infrastructure and long-term expertise in software technologies.

The problems and disadvantages of the second developmental stage are obvious: End users are reluctant to trust an offshore firm several thousand miles away with the development of a mission-critical system. It's often not clear to the customer whether the software developers will understand the nuances of his or her requirements, nor is it clear how well the developers can respond to ongoing changes in those requirements.

Most developing countries have a mediocre telecommunications infrastructure, compounded by bureaucracies that Americans would find mind-boggling. For example, when I recently tried to establish E-mail communication with a colleague in India, my colleague apologized for the delay caused by the need to file government applications and obtain permits—just to get an E-mail address on someone else's Internet node. In theory, modern technology allows easy fax and E-mail communication from New York to Bangalore just as it does from Bangalore to New York; however, in practice, it doesn't always turn out that way.

The second stage, however, isn't an all-or-nothing proposition: It works in some instances, not in others. It's particularly good for certain kinds of systems programming projects, where the interface and the end results are well understood and clearly defined. For example, a software engineer who's building a C++ compiler for yet another Unix hardware box doesn't need much communication with the programmers who will be the product's end users. This explains why many U.S. hardware and software companies are heavy users of second-stage software organizations. Also, if you're part of a multinational company that has already dealt with the telecommunications issues for its overseas operations (e.g., Andersen Consulting, which recently established an office in Manila), you probably won't encounter many new problems when you farm out some of your software projects.

*continued*

### Growth Stages for Foreign Software Industries

1. Foreign programmers develop software with teams located at the customer's local site.
2. A small group of on-site systems analysts works with the customer to define a project's system requirements, which they then transmit to programmers in their home country for implementation and coding.
3. Overseas developers create generic software products that can be marketed both in the home country and in the advanced countries.
4. Overseas software producers offer to the world products that take advantage of specialized knowledge and unique areas of expertise in their native countries.



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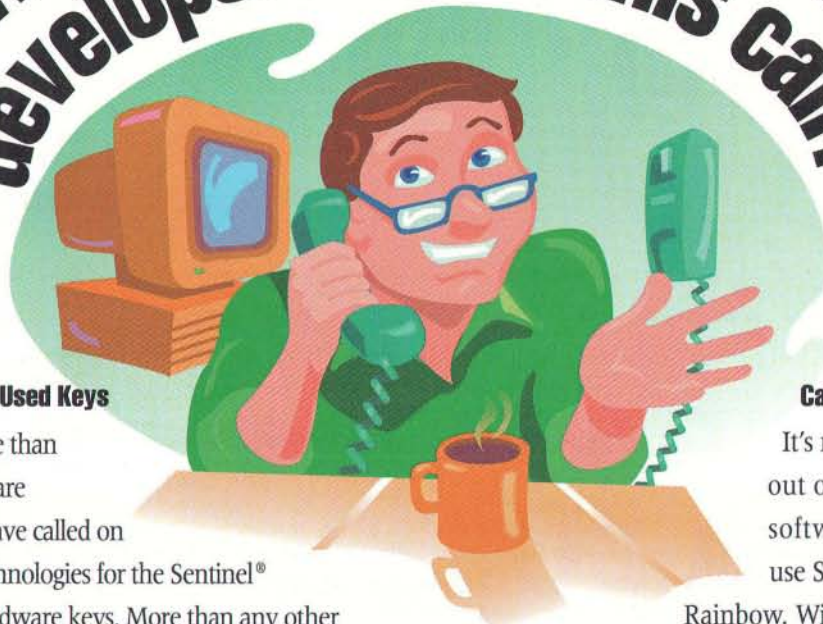


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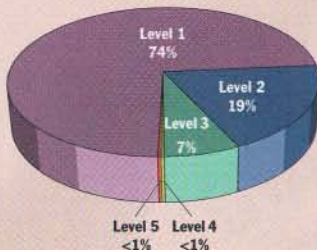
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## Software Process Maturity Scale



Designed to rate the capability of a software organization to consistently produce high-quality software, the figures below show the percentage of software-producing organizations that have achieved a given level.

**Level 1: Initial**—The ability to complete the project

**Level 2: Repeatable**—Good project organization/planning, testing, and quality assurance; configuration management issues in hand

**Level 3: Defined**—A standardized development process across the organization; intergroup control; peer review/walk-throughs; and proactive training programs to improve human skills to meet the organization's needs

**Level 4: Managed**—A solid metrics program in place; the ability to quantify the process; the ability to establish and meet benchmarks

**Level 5: Optimizing**—Pulling all the pieces together; reacting to changes and proactively anticipating problems; the ability to use numerical metrics to feed back into the process; and continuous improvement based on experience

Source: Software Engineering Institute

**Within Motorola—a company where quality is taken seriously—the only software organization to achieve level 5 on the SEI scale is in Bangalore, India.**

And if your users and developers are accustomed to working with a rigorous software methodology that CASE tools support, you can reduce the communications problems substantially. The Pact Group, a company based in Lyons, France, has taken this approach. It works with European clients and documents user requirements in a KnowledgeWare ADW CASE tool. The ADW repository is then shipped to Manila, where a "software factory" of Filipino programmers, each equipped with a personal KnowledgeWare CASE tool, carries out the design, implementation, and testing.

### Stage 3: Offshore Generic Software

The third stage in the growth of the offshore software industry is the development of generic software products—such as word processing packages, spreadsheets, and database programs—that can be marketed both in the home country and in the rest of the world.

This stage often begins with the offshore software developers producing software for their local markets. This is possible because off-the-shelf American software may be unsuitable for a variety of reasons. The American software giants might consider the software market in Uruguay, for example, too small to bother with. Also, senior managers at Microsoft have told me that a new product doesn't even show up as a "blip" in the accounting

system until it generates \$50 million in annual revenues; but this would represent a phenomenal success for a software producer in many developing countries, who would be happy with even a small fraction of that amount. Similarly, American software producers might ignore Brazil because of problems with government bureaucracy or concerns about rampant piracy. They may have ignored North African and Middle Eastern countries for political reasons or because they couldn't or wouldn't cope with the difficulties of Arabic script.

American-made software can pose other, more subtle problems once it crosses the border. Standard, shrink-wrapped PC software packages from software giants like Lotus and Microsoft are intended primarily for operation on American-built hardware boxes by English-speaking programmers. No matter what vendors tell you about their support for non-English languages and less-common PC clones, programmers in developing countries such as Mexico, Brazil, and Chile find the reality quite different; they talked to me at length about their problems getting "standard" software (e.g., word processors or spreadsheets) working on their machines. Sometimes the problem was with the hardware or the operating system, and sometimes it was with the foreign-language dictionary or thesaurus.

Stage 3 becomes more interesting when the offshore developer decides to bring its software to the North American marketplace. Obviously, the same kind of problem can exist when dealing with the European or Japanese marketplace or any other market that already has an advanced, computer-literate user population. Even if the new software is bug-free, the developer's cultural assumptions and trappings may cause problems (e.g., with user manuals and GUI interfaces that the American user finds subtly unacceptable). (For another perspective on cultural differences, see "Crossing the Cultural Boundary" on page 107.)

But the real problem involves marketing. The cost to bring even the smallest PC application into the American marketplace can be daunting enough for the

American start-up software company, let alone its third-world counterpart in Montevideo or São Paulo. Moreover, access to a million dollars provides no guarantee of success. You can argue that Microsoft and Lotus are juggernauts,

not because of their software technology but because of their marketing muscle. Suppose a software organization in India developed a look-alike version of Windows NT that was functionally equivalent but half the price, twice as fast, and only half as big. Even aside from the issue of copyright-infringement lawsuits (which is also an extremely potent marketing weapon), what chance would the Indian company have to market the product successfully?

Perhaps NT is too ambitious. What about a word processor? Many articles in the trade press have complained about rampant bugs and bloated "fatware" characteristics of the latest releases of Microsoft Word and WordPerfect 6.0 (see "Fighting Fatware," April 1993 BYTE). It's easier to imagine an offshore software producer successfully marketing a \$100 word processor that provides 80 percent of the functionality of the big-name brands but manages to fit in 256 KB. Even if you were to give it a full megabyte, you'd still be far ahead of the fatware products that require 8 to 10 MB of disk space—and that's just for the DOS versions; Windows software can take 15 to 30 MB or more per package.

The natural reaction is to dismiss such a



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# Software in Russia

**RONALD B. SCOTT**

**B**ack in 1989, when the Perestroika policies of Mikhail Gorbachev began lifting the iron curtain, several people in the information industry seemed to think that Russia had dilapidated facilities, outdated equipment, and technical knowledge and skills that bordered on the Neanderthal. And Russia's well-deserved reputation as a "one-disk nation" limited its appeal as a software market.

That was then; this is now. Russia adopted copyright laws last year, and a new ethical standard has been taking hold. Bootlegging hasn't yet gone the way of the manual typewriter, but nowadays "owning legal software is a status symbol," according to Esther Dyson, an industry watcher who has taken an active interest in eastern Europe and Russia.

Judging by strong sales in the fourth quarter of 1993 and the first two months of 1994, an attitude adjustment is being felt. Hard numbers are elusive and would not be large in dollars, but established companies did up to 70 percent of their annual business during 1993's final quarter, a year in which sales jumped 40 percent overall. Despite inflation, unit sales increased at similar paces. Demand for exhibit space at Moscow's Comtek '94 trade show quadrupled. Novell, which previously sold NetWare

through distributors, will open a Russian office in 1994. Compaq plans to sell its machines direct to end users. Oracle is doing well, as are several CAD/CAM developers.

## **A Two-Way Market**

More and more Western organizations are discovering that Russian development teams are extremely cost-efficient (a well-paid Ph.D. engineer earns about \$200 a month) and skilled. This may not thrill unemployed U.S. programmers, but it suggests that, despite inflation approaching 1000 percent in Moscow, the Russian software industry has considerable vitality.

In late 1990, Lotus Development opened an office in Moscow, expecting to get more arrows in its back than bills in its wallet. "Our entry strategy was very conservative: Win market share without losing money," says Jane Kitson, president of Lotus Development Russia. Early success prompted step two and its savvy "just in time" strategy. "We had all these rubles that were worth a lot more in Russia than in the U.S., so we reinvested here to strengthen our organization and reduce our cost of goods," says Kitson. "Today, everything but the shrink-wrap and the boxes is produced locally."

Lotus's pioneering actions have paid big dividends. At the present time, Lotus's Russian distributors report that Lotus 1-2-3 (the first Western software package specifically localized for the

Russian market) accounts for 90 percent of the DOS spreadsheets in Russia, according to a Lotus spokesperson. Lotus's Organizer, a personal information product for the Russian market; it has virtually no competition, and the same goes for cc:Mail. The spokesperson also reports that "most of the 2 million 386 and 486 computers in Russia are networked," and that Russia is proving a valuable testing ground for Notes, Lotus's group-information communications software.

Ironically, Lotus's network of 11 distributors and 500 dealers—stretching from Kiev in Ukraine to Vladivostok on the Pacific Ocean—has benefited newcomers like Symantec and Microsoft, which finally and grudgingly established a ruble price for their products late last year.

"Getting here first was critical, selling for rubles was essential," says Kitson. "Brand loyalty is stronger here than in the U.S., partly because the previous system taught that competition puts people out of jobs. We worked hard to convince our dealers that competition builds jobs, that it was not disloyal to distribute Microsoft products, too."

As the pioneer, Lotus learned some early cultural lessons. First, instead of betting the farm on the unknown skills of a native, it imported a known expatriate American. "We didn't think we'd find the commercial skill set necessary to

scenario as unrealistic, if not downright impossible—but is it any less plausible than Japan's marketing the Honda Civic and Toyota Corolla against Detroit's 1970s-era gas-guzzlers? In fairness, I should point out that the Japanese had been producing automobiles for their own marketplace for 20 years before they decided to enter the U.S., and they also had a great deal more capital than the typical two-guys-in-a-garage software organizations that are popping up in third-world countries. On the other hand, it was barely over a decade ago that Microsoft and Lotus were, for all practical purposes, two guys

in a garage; things change quickly in the software field. In the meantime, you should expect to see foreign-developed software that is shrink-wrapped inside an American software box; the consumer won't know that Russian programmers have developed the software (see the text box "Software in Russia").

## **Stage 4: Exploiting Home-Grown Expertise**

The fourth and final stage in the development of a software industry involves the development of products that take full advantage of the native country's unique areas of applications expertise. I have seen

unique applications that originated in Egypt, Brazil, Chile, India, Singapore, and the Philippines. All of them involve indigenous applications expertise that is completely independent of the software technology per se, and all are being packaged as commercially salable products.

*Egypt: Multimedia and International Finance.* A good example of home-grown expertise is Egypt, which has built some wonderful multimedia applications to catalog, manage, and display its vast treasure of historical artifacts. These applications are likely to be far more sophisti-



## State of the Art Developing Software Overseas

make a product and sell it at a profit without making bribes," says Robert P. Schechter, Lotus senior vice president. Second, Lotus gave Kitson the title of president, a distinction it offers no other Lotus country manager. There is little doubt that her title smooths relations with rank-conscious, malechauvinist Russian apparatchiks and businessmen.

Most barriers weren't difficult to overcome. "All of the professional Russian employees speak decent English. And all the programmers here speak C++, too," says Alexander Lvov, Lotus's director of localization.

There is an ironic side to the software growth story. Although Western products have made significant inroads in the former Soviet Union, few (if any) Russian products have made it out to the West. However, substantial chunks of Russian code can be found in "more products than we know of," according to industry-watcher Dyson. In March, for instance, Probots of Northampton, Massachusetts, released GMS 2.0, an automated modeling system that incorporates advanced mathematical technology developed by the Russian Academy of Sciences. Corel has licensed a spreadsheet from Microforum in Moscow and embedded it in CorelDraw 4.0.

Many believe that licensing underlying code will make up the bulk of the East-to-West software trade for some time to come. "The technology gap is too huge; most Russian products are obsolete by U.S. standards," says George Tarasenko, a software engineer who emigrated to the U.S. nine years ago and now consults with companies such as Bell At-

lantic and Clear Software, a company founded by another Russian émigré, Vadim Yasinovsky.

Over time, though, you can expect Russian engineers to produce more substantial add-in/add-on products. When Microsoft introduced its Russian version of Windows last October, the company sponsored a developers' conference that was packed with engineers who had previously been developing Windows products using the English-language version.

Lvov and Tarasenko see many opportunities for collaboration. "Because of the broad, theoretical education Russian engineers receive, they are good at building the skeleton for a product, while Americans, who receive more specialized training, are good at putting flesh on the skeleton," says Lvov.

"We have much to learn from each other," adds Lvov, who sees real advantages in Western development and compensation practices. "Teamwork was more important than quality in the old Russian system. Everyone was always minding your business," he says. "Now, I have team members to consult with when I need help, but I own my assignment. Before, you weren't penalized for failing—but you weren't rewarded for producing, either." ■

*Ronald B. Scott is chairman of the Boston office of Ruder.Finn, Inc., a global-marketing communications firm. He writes a monthly column on business in the former Soviet Union for The Boston Business Journal. He was formerly a marketing executive with Baltic American Software, a joint Russian-U.S. venture. You can reach him on the Internet or BIX at editors@bix.com.*

cated than anything Americans would build in the U.S.

Obviously, the technology of multimedia is being developed largely in Hollywood and Silicon Valley, but the application of multimedia often depends on local circumstances. Every country has museums, and even the U.S. has some historical artifacts that date back a few hundred years—but it's hard to imagine another country with as many millennia of accumulated history as Egypt. And while museums in the U.S. are often ignored by everyone but bored retirees, Egypt's museums and historical artifacts are a major

tourist attraction and thus a major source of revenue. In addition, they are a constant source of investigation by scholars wishing to carry out research "at the source." If you were a museum director in Greece, Rome, China, India, or any other country with millennia of history, culture, and historical artifacts to catalog, organize, and present to the public in multimedia form, you would almost certainly find better systems to buy from the museums in Cairo than from those in Cleveland.

Ironically, Egypt has also built some of the world's most sophisticated financial applications for managing its vast array of

loans and financial-aid packages from numerous countries, international agencies, and relief organizations. Other third-world countries might find such applications quite useful, and they certainly won't find anything like them in the catalogs of Borland, Apple, or Microsoft.

**Hong Kong: The Race Is On.** The Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club generates nearly \$10 billion in annual revenues from horse racing and other forms of entertainment. The club's MIS organization is certainly on a par with the best in the U.S., and it uses the latest object-oriented methodologies and client/server architectures. But what MIS knows about computer support for offtrack betting is truly unique; there are betting stations sprinkled all over Hong Kong like ATM machines, and the level of sophistication is awesome. Several American municipalities allow offtrack betting, but how many languages and character sets do their systems have to support? How many currencies? The Jockey Club handles all these variables and more. As a result, it is in a prime position to sell its system to other race-happy centers in Australia, Kuala Lumpur, and so on.

**Singapore: Shipping Out the Red Tape.** Over the past decade, Singapore has become known as a center of high-tech manufacturing; a number of electronics companies and computer firms have regional headquarters there. But for centuries prior to the computer age, Singapore was a deep-water port and trading center for ships plying the waters between Europe and the Orient. As a result, the native population of Singapore knows an enormous amount about shipping and about the paperwork and information processing required to move cargo items on and off ships—customs forms, bills of lading, and dozens of other forms. The faster this paperwork can be processed, the faster a ship can unload its cargo, reload a new cargo, and be on its way to the next port.

Singapore has spent several years creating an extremely sophisticated computerized management system for its deep-water ports. This system, developed with assistance from the National Computing Board as part of its larger scheme to make Singapore an "intelligent island" within the next decade, makes heavy use of expert-system technology. Singapore now markets its port management system to Rotterdam, Hong Kong, New York, and other major ports around the world.

*continued*



## State of the Art Developing Software Overseas

**Brazil: Banking on Hyperinflation.** Consider the impact of hyperinflation, a problem that the U.S. has not experienced since the revolutionary war. Countries such as Brazil have dealt with the phenomenon for decades, and it has had a pervasive influence not only on their economies as a whole but also on the various computer systems used to operate businesses within those economies. Remember how anxious you were in the early 1980s to get an extra day's interest on your bank account when interest rates were hovering around 20 percent? Remember how annoyed you got at banking inefficiencies, and how nobody could explain what happened to your money in the three days between the rent check's being deducted from your account and showing up in the landlord's bank account?

Well, imagine what it's like to live in a country where the inflation rate is 30 percent per month, where the locals joke that you can tell whether inflation is really bad by watching whether people travel by bus (where you pay at the beginning of the

ride) or taxi (where you pay at the end of the ride). In the case of Brazil and a number of other countries, you can also add the fact that banks have nationwide charters, without the crazy-quilt of state-chartered banks that exists in the U.S. The end result is that some of the banking systems developed in Brazil are much more superior to those in the U.S. and are being marketed aggressively in countries whose economies are more like Brazil's than the U.S.'s.

**The U.S.: Still Competitive.** Meanwhile, the U.S. still has application areas where it can expect to maintain a competitive advantage. For example, the U.S. dominates the world in PC-based operating systems, and it will probably continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Applications and systems involving multimedia technology, agents and wizards, pen-based and wireless/mobile computing, and virtual reality are areas of strength, as is anything involving the information highway. On the other hand, you could have said the same

about client/server technology, object orientation, and various other technologies a few years ago—and now those technologies are deployed around much of the world.

### A Brave New World

Worldwide competition in the software industry is not a unique phenomenon. Software engineers in the advanced countries can compete with those in the third world, just as American and European automobile companies have learned to compete. But that process cannot even begin until workers and management in the advanced countries learn that serious competition is possible, and that it is real. The software industry has not yet recognized this, but we will certainly see it occur during the next few years. ■

*Edward Yourdon is the globe-trotting author of numerous books on structured and object-oriented programming, and editor of the American Programmer and Guerrilla Programmer newsletters. He can be reached on the Internet at yourdon@acm.org or on BIX c/o "editors."*

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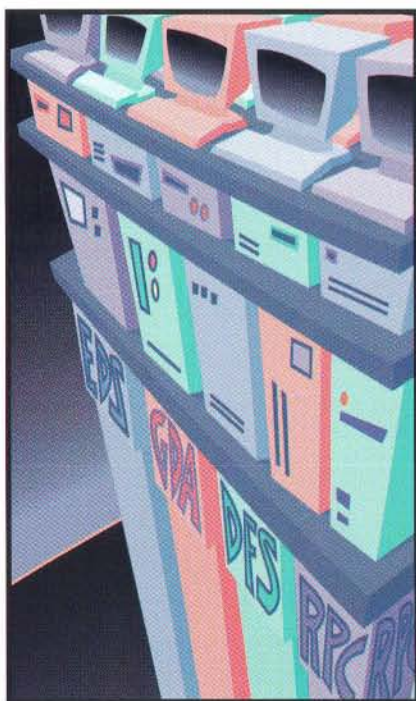
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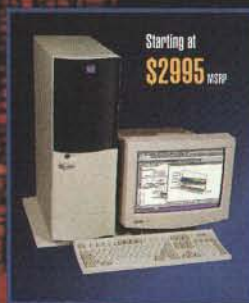
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# DCE: Building the Distributed Future

**MICHAEL D. MILLIKIN**

**D**istributed computing deals with higher-level issues than physical media and interconnection. The distributed environments must give users and applications transparent access to data, computation, and other resources across collections of multi-vendor, heterogeneous systems. The strategic architectures of every major system vendor are now based on some form of distributed computing environment.

The key to realizing the theoretical benefit of such an architecture is transparency. Users can't spend their time thrashing about trying to figure out where something is. Nor should developers have to code into their applications the locations of resources over the network; it is in no one's interest to force applications developers to become communications gurus. Nor should business users have to worry about mounting remote volumes. And from the MIS viewpoint, the network should be manageable. The final picture is one of a "virtual" network: a collection of workgroup, departmental, enterprise, and inter-enterprise LANs that appears to the end user or client application to be a seamless and easily accessed whole.

One technology that will figure prominently in the future of distributed computing is the Open Software Foundation's DCE (Distributed Computing Environment). OSF's DCE is an integrated set of operating-system- and network-independent services that support the development, use, and maintenance of distributed applications. Because of its ability to enable a manageable, transparent, and interoperable network of multivendor, multiplatform systems, DCE could prove to be one of the most important technologies of the decade.

DCE is a technology most users will likely end up licensing from their system vendors. Most of the major players have committed to delivering DCE in future versions of system and network software. For example, IBM, which provides a number of AIX-based DCE products, has broadened its DCE offerings to include PC LANs. In September 1993, IBM shipped a DCE SDK (Software Development Kit) for OS/2 and Windows and, at the same time, made available its first DCE product aimed at PC end users, the DCE Client for OS/2. In February, after months of testing,

a Windows cousin appeared. By the end of this year, IBM plans to begin beta testing a new OS/2 LAN Server that will include "snap-on" modules for specific DCE services.

Some large end users, however, went directly to OSF to license the early versions of the software. Those are the sophisticated users—such as Citibank, the Argonne National Laboratory, and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory—that began to develop distributed applications in-house.

For example, Citibank developed a prototype application in which a Sun workstation makes calls to an IBM RS/6000 server, which in turn executes APPC (Advanced Peer-to-Peer Communications) LU6.2 calls that execute on an MVS host. In the past, Citibank developers would have spent months building some of the network application infrastructure (e.g., security, support for APPC, and transactional extensions) for such an application.

In this prototype, however, a client Motif application running on a Sun workstation makes transactional RPCs (remote procedure calls) using a third-party vendor's (Transarc's) transactional extensions to DCE to a server running on an RS/6000. The RPC server there executes APPC LU6.2 calls (using the Transarc APPC run-time library), which execute on an MVS host. Everything participates in the same two-phase commit. Interoperability in this union of MVS and Open Systems is transparent.

*continued*



ILLUSTRATION: ROBERT BURGER © 1994

**OSF's Distributed Computing Environment standard makes distributed computing usable and invisible**



Citibank developers get to concentrate on the application rather than the application enablers. That is the promise of DCE in action.

DCE is constructed on a layered architecture, from the most basic providers of services (e.g., operating systems) up to higher-end clients of services (e.g., applications). Security and management are essential to all layers in the model. Currently, DCE consists of seven tools and services that are divided into fundamental distributed services and data-sharing services.

The fundamental distributed services include threads, RPCs, directory service, time service, and security service. Data-Sharing Services build on top of the fundamental services and include DFS (Distributed File System) and diskless support. The OSF has reserved space for possible future services, such as spooling, transaction services, and distributed object-oriented environments.

### Threads

Traditionally, applications deal with processes, each of which has a single thread of control. In this model, multiple tasks within applications are divided among multiple communicating processes.

Essentially, threads extend the process model to multiple threads of control that share a single address space and set of resources. A multithreaded program has decomposed a single program into multiple threads of execution. Threads are an im-

portant emerging model for expressing parallelism within a process, especially within a distributed environment.

For example, this threading capability becomes particularly important within the context of an RPC. The RPC is synchronous by nature: A client makes a call for a remote function and then waits around until the call is fulfilled. With threads, however, one thread can make the request, but another can begin to process the data from a different request. Threading can therefore greatly improve the performance of a distributed application.

The threads model puts less demand on the skill of a programmer than other parallelism alternatives, such as explicit asynchronous operations or shared memory. Asynchronous interfaces, although they've existed in some environments for some time, can be complex to implement. In the commercial world, the less retraining a new technology causes, the better—retraining programmers can be a major cost constraint. Threads preserve a traditional, synchronous view of the world.

Because of threading's obvious performance benefits, most modern operating systems are multithreaded. Much of the installed base is not, however. To provide threads to support distributed applications on those systems that do not support threading natively, OSF DCE offers a threads package. This is essentially a library of threads routines.

Compared to kernel-based threads, library-based threads have some functional restrictions, but they are really the best choice for broad heterogeneous interoperability at this time. The presence of threads libraries provides a common denominator of

## WHAT THE DCE RPC OFFERS

### SIMPLICITY

### CONSISTENT PROTOCOL

### CONSISTENT BEHAVIOR OVER MULTIPLE TRANSPORTS

### FULFILLMENT OF OTHER DCE NEEDS

### SECURITY

### INTERNATIONALIZATION

functionality across different operating-system platforms that might or might not have native support. The DCE RPC; the security, directory, and time services; and DFS all use the threads service.

### The RPC

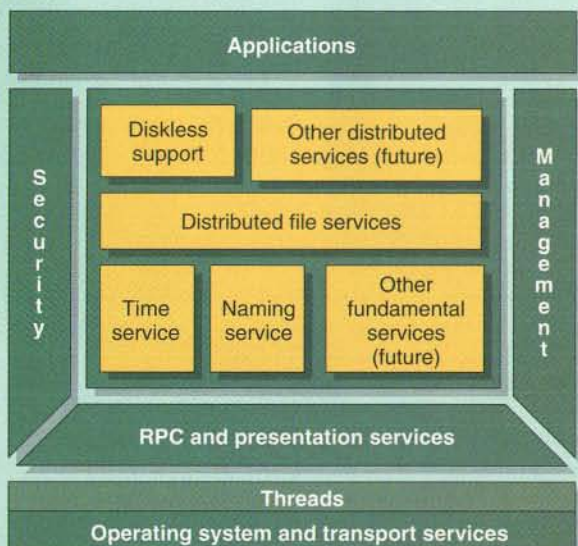
A well-known mechanism for implementing distributed processing, the RPC extends a familiar programming model (the procedure call) across the network. The RPC can handle the nuts and bolts of distribution (e.g., the semantics of the call, binding to the server, or communication failures). In theory, the programmer does not have to become a communications expert to write a distributed network application. Programmers will use an interface specification language to specify the operations. Compiling this then produces code for both client and server. To enable this type of function, the RPC must be simple, transparent, and reliable and must perform well.

The DCE RPC offers simplicity. It adheres to the local procedure model as closely as possible while providing the distributed aspects of applications in a straightforward manner. It foists less of a conceptual change on developers, thereby reducing retraining time. This is especially important for in-house corporate development teams.

Consistent protocol is another DCE RPC hallmark. The RPC protocol is clearly specified and is not subject to user (i.e., developer) modification. This guaranteed core is an important consideration in a heterogeneous environment requiring interoperability. It's a specific design philosophy that the OSF has chosen; proponents of other RPC tools think that flexibility and the ability for developers to customize by adding their own functional extensions are more important.

Regardless of the transport protocol it runs on, the DCE RPC provides identical behavior and keeps the management of connections invisible. The RPC interface

## The OSF DCE Architecture



The DCE architecture follows a layered model that integrates a set of technologies. The most basic, or supplier, services—such as the operating system—are at the bottom, with the highest level being service consumers, or applications. Security and management apply to all layers.



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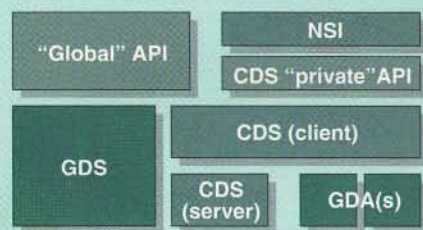
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### The OSF DCE Directory Service



The CDS is optimized for local access. The bulk of directory service queries will ask about resources within the query originator's cell. The GDA takes queries to names that it cannot find in the local cell and passes them to another cell service or to the GDS, depending on the location of the name. Based on the X.500 standard, GDS functions as a higher level of the directory hierarchy in order to connect multiple cells in multiple organizations.

supports a variety of transports simultaneously, and it allows the introduction of new transports and protocols without affecting the coding of the application.

The DCE RPC fits in well with the other needs of DCE: naming, DFS, security, and time service. The DCE RPC integrates with the authentication system to enable secure communications. It integrates with client and server threads, preserving the synchronous interface while allowing both client and server to exploit concurrency. Its ability to send and receive indeterminate-length streams of typed data supports DFS.

The DCE RPC is integrated with the DCE Security Service to guarantee authenticity, integrity, and privacy of communications. And it supports doublebyte character sets, such as those used in Japanese and other Asian languages.

#### Distributed Directory Service

Finding things (e.g., users, resources, data, or applications) in a distributed network is the task of the directory service. Name or directory services must map large numbers of system objects (e.g., users, organizations, groups, computers, printers, files, processes, and services) to user-oriented names. The problem is difficult enough in a homogeneous LAN environment, given personnel and equipment moves and changes to names, locations, and so forth. In a heterogeneous global WAN (wide-area network) environment, the directory task becomes considerably more complex, given the need to synchronize different directory databases. Furthermore, as distributed applications appear on the network, the directories have to begin tracking

all those objects and their components as well.

A good name service makes use of a distributed computing environment transparent to the user. Users should not have to know the location of a remote printer, file, or application, for example, nor should they have to key in the X.400 mail address for a distant colleague.

OSF specified a two-tier architecture for the name service to address both intracell and worldwide communications. The *cell* is a fundamental organizational unit for systems in OSF's DCE. Cells can map to social, political, or organizational boundaries, and consist of computers that must communicate frequently with one another—workgroups, departments, or divisions of companies, for example. Generally, computers in a cell are geographically close. Cells range in size from two to thousands of computers, although OSF cites tens to hundreds as being the most common range.

Some vendors and users have pushed for the implementation of X.500 as a common directory service at all levels. But the OSF believed that using X.500 at the workgroup (i.e., cell) level would have been cumbersome because of the software and performance requirements—especially when more nimble cell-level directory services already existed in the market.

There are four elements in the DCE directory service:

**CDS (Cell Directory Service).** A network cell is a group of systems administered as a single entity. The CDS is optimized for local access. The bulk of directory service queries asks about resources within the query originator's cell. Each network cell needs at least one CDS.

**GDA (Global Directory Agent).** The GDA is a naming gateway that connects the DCE domain to other administrative domains through the X.500 worldwide directory service and DNS (Domain Name Service). The GDA takes queries to names that it cannot find in the local cell and passes them to another cell service or to the Global Directory Service (depending on the location of the name). To look up a name, a client queries the local GDA. The GDA then passes an interdomain name query to the X.500 service. This service returns the response to the GDA, which in turn responds to the client. The OSF GDA can

be compatible with any global naming scheme.

**GDS (Global Directory Service).** Based on the X.500 standard, the GDS functions as a higher level of the directory hierarchy in order to connect multiple cells in multiple organizations.

**XDS (X/Open Directory Service).** Support for the X/Open API for directory service calls allows developers to write applications independent of the underlying directory service architecture. An XDS-compliant application will work unmodified with both DCE and X.500 directory services.

#### Distributed Security Service

There are two broad general categories of security services: authentication and authorization. Authentication verifies the identity of an entity (i.e., a user or a service). Authorization (or access control) grants privileges to the entity, such as access to a file.

Authorization alone is only a partial solution, however. Authentication services must exist within a distributed network environment where a workstation cannot be trusted to identify itself or its users correctly to shared network services. An authentication service is a mechanism for providing trusted third-party verification of user identities. An authentication service, which basically requires the user to prove his or her identity for each required service, must be secure, reliable, transparent, and scalable.

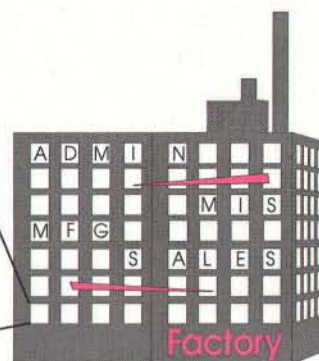
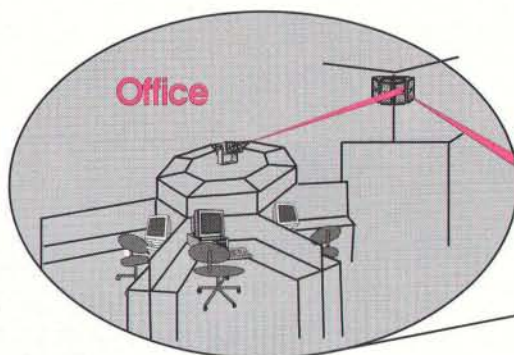
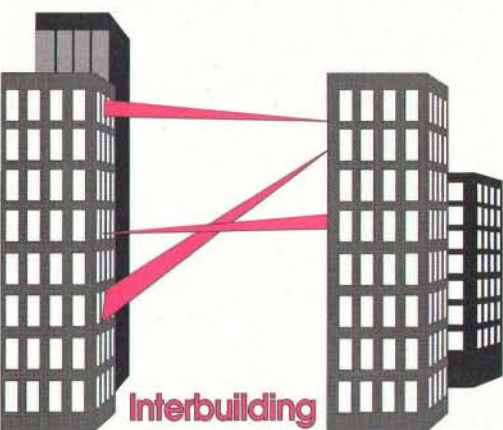
OSF security is based on the Kerberos authentication system (developed at MIT's Project Athena), augmented by security components (see "Distributed and Secure" on page 165). Kerberos uses private-key encryption to provide three levels of protection. The lowest level requires only that user authenticity be established at the initiation of a connection, assuming that subsequent network messages flow from the authenticated principal. The next level up requires the authentication of each network message. On the level beyond these safe messages are private messages, where each message is encrypted as well as authenticated.

End users should be minimally affected by the network-based service. In other words, you shouldn't have to memorize dozens of passwords or codes. A great deal of the security benefits stem from this network service's managing a user's



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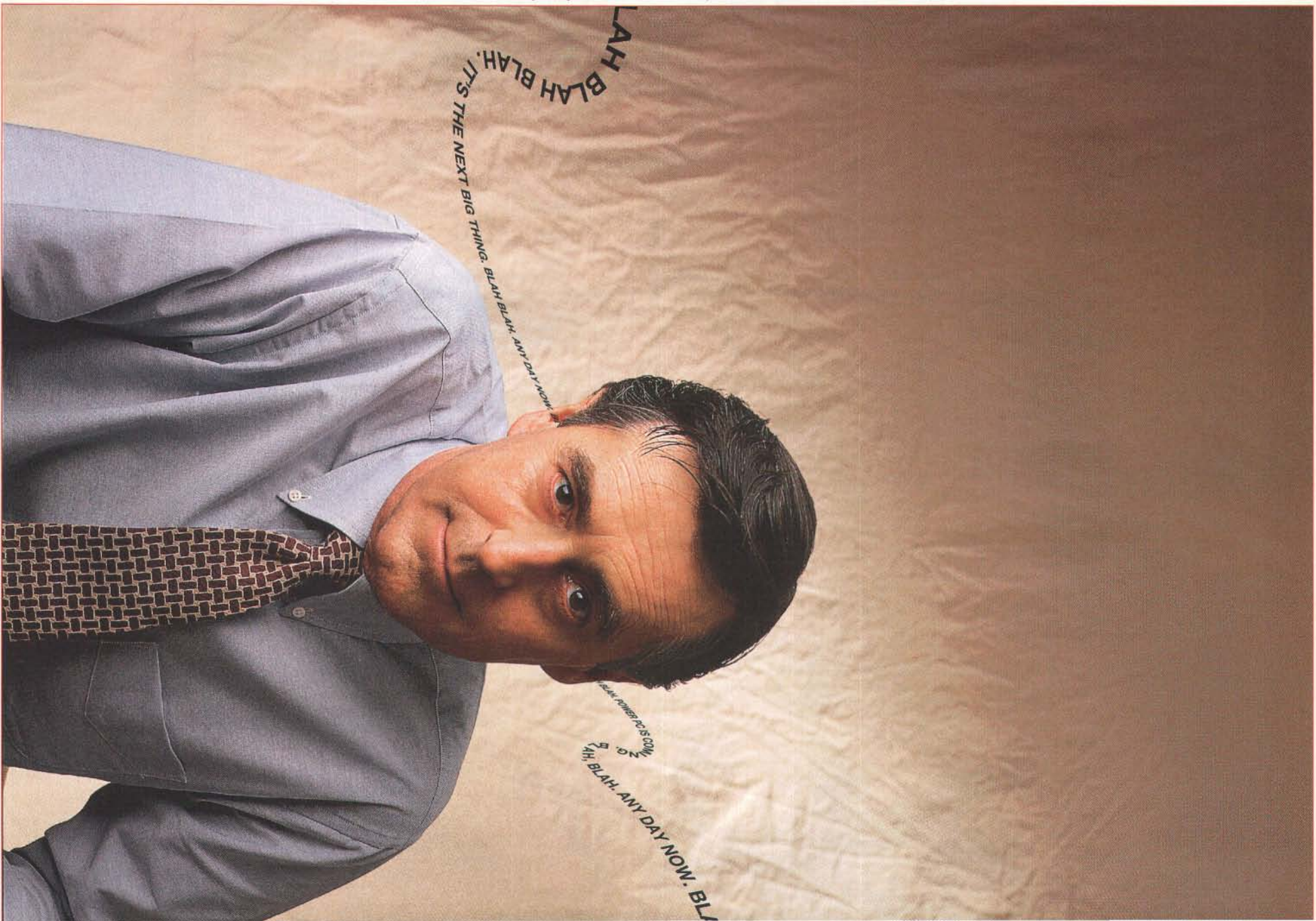
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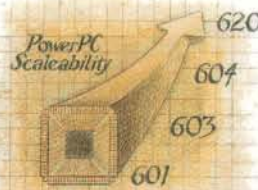
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## OSF Reorganizes, Sun Enters the Fold

**F**rom the Open Software Foundation's inception in 1988, OSF's relationship with Sun Microsystems was competitive, to be polite. Sun certainly was up to the challenge, with executives claiming that OSF really stood for "Oppose Sun Forever." The resulting contention prolonged the split between the two major Unix camps for years.

All that ended in March 1994 at Uniforum, where OSF unveiled a new business model and process that bring Sun's SunSoft unit into the fold as one of the key members of the new organization. The new OSF (which is retaining the OSF name for the moment) is shifting to a more project-oriented operating model. Technology projects will be funded separately and managed individually, and engineering work will be outsourced. The hope is that this structure will promote more concurrent technology projects, addressing more customer-specific technology issues and requirements in a more timely manner.

The reorganized OSF relies on a new multi-tiered sponsorship structure, consisting of executive sponsors and associate sponsors. Executive sponsorship requires a three-year commitment at a membership fee of \$1 million per year. Associate sponsors pay a fee of \$200,000 per year. Existing membership levels for nonsponsors remain unchanged.

OSF is also adopting a new technology selection process. In the past, OSF issued an RFT (Request for Technology) for a specific area, evaluated the submissions, and integrated those selected. Under the new organization, project sponsors can take the initiative in proposing a complete development solution in the form of a PST (Pre-Structured Technology). Under the new organization, DCE 1.1 is slated for release in November.

access—in other words, authorization.

OSF added a registry service and an authorization service as well. OSF is also including authorization checks based on Posix-conformant ACLs (access control lists) and an authentication interface to the RPC.

There is growing de facto support in the industry for public-key encryption systems such as the one provided by the RSA (Rivest-Shamir-Adleman) method. (Microsoft and Apple, for example, are working with RSA technology.) OSF also intends that applications for DCE be portable from Kerberos to public-key authentication schemes such as that provided by RSA.

### Distributed File System

The OSF DFS is intended to provide transparent access to any file sitting on any node on the network (security permitting, of course). A major concern in such a distributed file system is making it simple for users. Vendors must address a number of other issues in delivering such a file system.

For example, a distributed file system

should have a uniform name space. Files should have the same name, regardless of platform and location. Other features to consider are integrated security, data consistency and availability, reliability and recovery, performance and scalability to very large configurations without performance degradation, and coherent, location-independent management and administration.

The OSF DFS, which is based on AFS (Andrew File System) from Transarc (Pittsburgh, PA), uses four principal components to address these needs: the DCE Logical File System, a protocol exporter (file server), a cache manager (client), and a token manager.

The implementation of DFS provides an excellent example of how the various components of DCE work together. DFS software resides on each node of the network. DFS integrates the node file systems with the DCE directory services, ensuring a uniform naming convention for all files stored in DFS. It uses the DCE security system, with ACLs to control access to individual files. The RPC streaming function allows DFS to move large

amounts of data through a WAN in one operation rather than dribbling it across in smaller packets; this capability is very important because of the latencies inherent in a WAN.

To maximize file-access performance, DFS caches frequently access files on a workstation's local drive. When a user ac-

cesses data on the file server, a copy of the data is cached locally. When the user is finished working with the data, the file is written back to the server. The result is rapid user access to distributed files.

To prevent problems from arising when multiple users on different comput-

ers access and modify the same data, DFS uses a token management scheme to coordinate file modification. This prevents unintentional corruption of distributed files through multiple out-of-sync updates.

DFS allows system administrators to subdivide file-system partitions into *filesets* (logical collections of files). Filesets are not mounted in the local file-system name space but are spliced into the DCE global-directory name space instead. The fileset is referenced by its global directory name, so its name is independent of its location. A fileset moved from one physical file-system partition to another maintains its global name.

Thus, filesets make for easy administration. If a disk partition is getting close to capacity, an administrator can move filesets to another partition or file server.

### Distributed Time Service

Distributed network systems need a consistent time service. Many distributed services, such as distributed file systems and authentication services, compare dates generated on different computers. For the comparison to be meaningful, DCE must support a consistent time stamp.

In OSF DCE, a time server is a system that provides time to other systems for the purpose of synchronization. Any non-time server system is called a *clerk*. The DTS (Distributed Time Service) uses three types of servers to coordinate network time. A local server synchronizes with other local servers on the same LAN. A global server is available across an extended LAN or a WAN. A *courier* is a designated local

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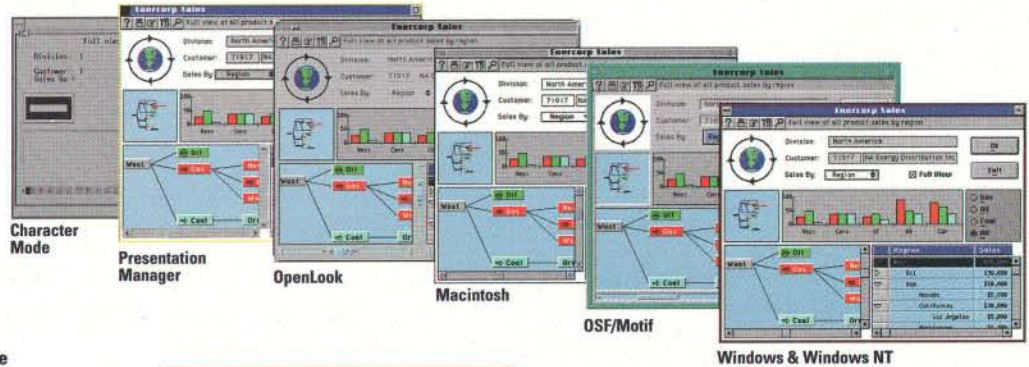
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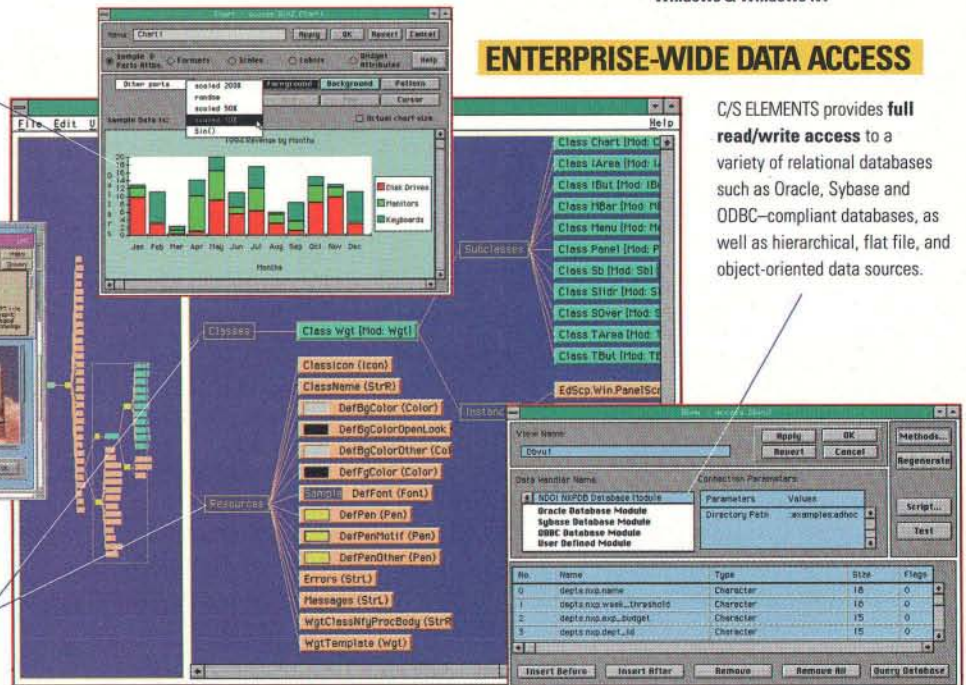
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server that regularly coordinates with global servers. Servers can obtain the official Universal Coordinated Time from standards organizations (e.g., the U.S. Naval Observatory) via short-wave radio, dial-up lines, or satellite.

At periodic intervals, servers synchronize with every other local server on the LAN via the DTS protocol. The OSF DTS synchronization protocol is interoperable with the NTP, the protocol used by the Internet.

#### Extending and Using DCE

The premise that DCE lays a foundation for extension is already being tested and proven. Transarc, which provided the basis for DFS to DCE, has released its Encina extensions for transaction processing based on DCE. Major user corporations such as Amoco have committed to DCE, and major system vendors such as IBM, DEC, and Hewlett-Packard are busy implementing and delivering elements of the technology.

The University of Massachusetts at Amherst is using DCE as a foundation for providing an advanced computing environment called Project Pilgrim. The leaders of Project Pilgrim decided that DCE best met their needs for an integrated and comprehensive distributed computing environment. Project Pilgrim is completing its own distributed printing, mail, and event-notification services to layer on top of DCE.

#### OSF DCE 1.1

Currently, DCE is in release 1.0.3. One of the major goals of DCE 1.1 is improved administrative function. Earlier versions lacked some functions, so it was difficult to configure or administer a DCE cell from a single log-in session. OSF is rectifying this in release 1.1 by providing a new user-extensible control program and a new server that will be able to start servers directly under a variety of circumstances and provide better control over (and information about) what services are running on a host. The new server will also maintain the configuration files that current DCE programs require.

Another major area for enhancement is security. Release 1.1 will see the addition

of GSSAPI (Generic Security Service Application Program Interface). The current scope of GSSAPI is establishing security contexts, performing peer-entity authentication, and yielding shared keys. One of its key goals is to provide non-RPC applications operating within a DCE environment with the ability to use the DCE Shared Secret authentication protocol. New audit subsystems in DCE 1.1 will track security-related events.

DCE 1.1 will be further internationalized to handle differing character sets or encodings for text data. The new version will also add support for hierarchical cell naming and extended registry attributes.

#### Interoperability

Although DCE has been built from many standard technologies and is designed to promote interoperability, it

is, in general, an extensive, interrelated environment. That is one of its strengths and also one of its weaknesses. The ability to switch in and out of DCE usage or to work in a mixed DCE/non-DCE environment doesn't appear likely right now. For example, although a DCE Kerberos server supports Kerberos 5, it is not compatible with MIT Kerberos 5. DCE Kerberos runs over the DCE RPC; MIT Kerberos 5 does not. OSF promises full Kerberos compatibility in DCE 1.1, but in the meantime users can solve the problem by taking a dual-stack approach and running both.

There are some exceptions to this tight integration of services within an extensive environment. Some of the DTS, security, and GDS features are stand-alone. In addition, GSSAPI will be in release 1.1. But the essential philosophy behind DCE views tight integration as a feature, not a bug. Accordingly, a burden is placed on the user or implementor in choosing another design path.

This is not an insurmountable barrier. As another example, DCE and Windows NT are said to be compatible, even though NT is not a DCE platform. Compatibility is claimed by virtue of the RPCs' ability to interoperate. After some careful work at the source code level, developers can create DCE servers that communicate with Windows NT clients, NT servers that work

with DCE clients, and DCE servers that communicate with DOS clients.

#### Areas for Extension

For DCE to fulfill its promise of becoming the foundation for widespread heterogeneous distributed computing, it must deliver support in two key general areas: TP (transaction processing) and object orientation.

Support for TP is fundamental to success in the commercial market as a production system. Transaction integrity must be a given for businesses that cannot afford any loss or inconsistency in data. Some of these sites have had gigantic centralized TP systems running for years. The base DCE technology is insufficient to provide the qualities expected in a standard TP system: the so-called ACID properties (atomicity, consistency, isolation, and durability). Transarc provides one solution for this with Encina. IBM offers another with an implementation of its CICS on top of DCE on AIX. IBM actually offers its customers a choice of either Encina or CICS for open TP solutions.

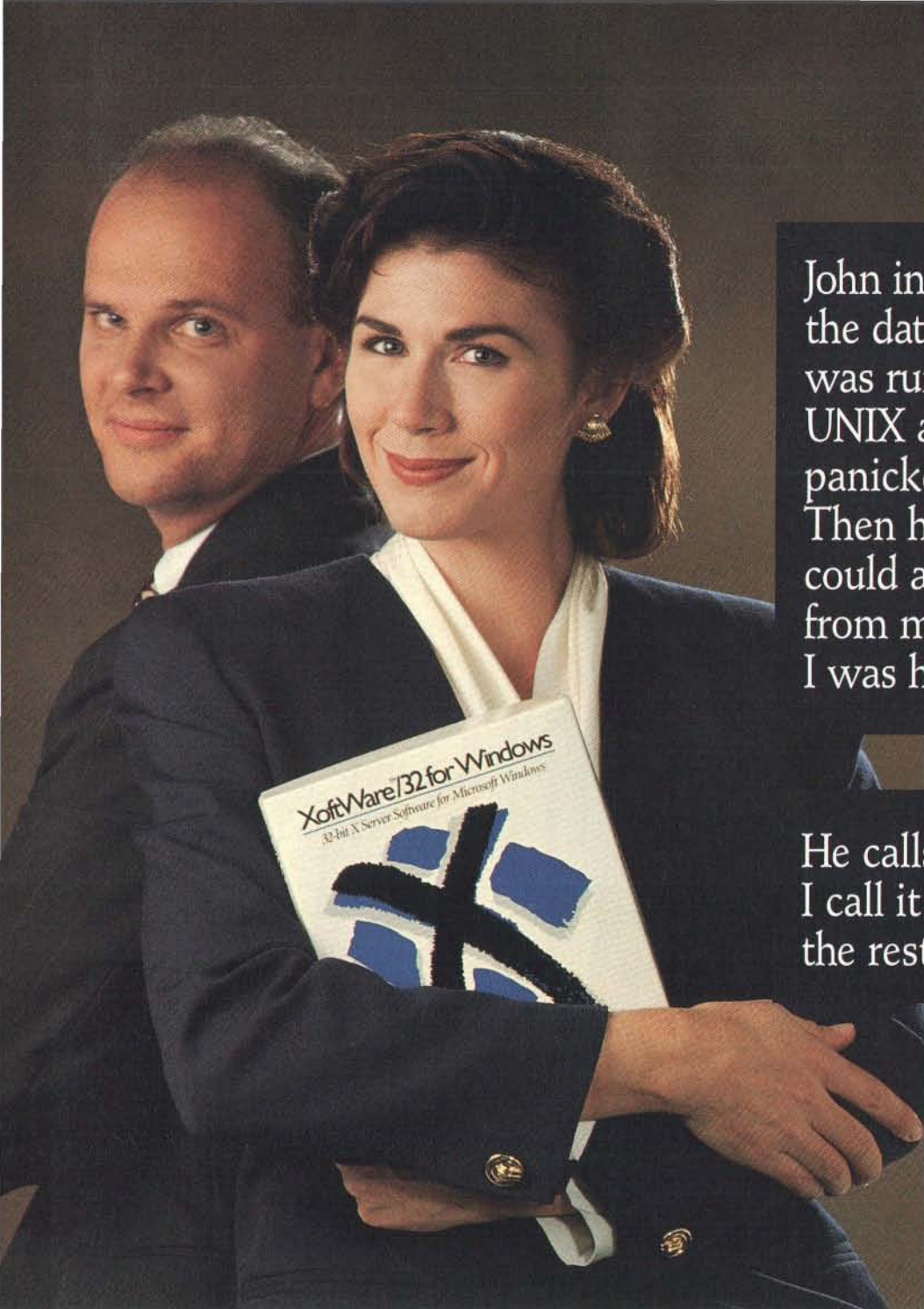
Object orientation will prove fundamental to the rapid proliferation of network-based applications, for some of the same reasons that are propelling the transparency of DCE to developers: It is too hard to write a network-based application without either extensive retraining or a technology that camouflages the intricacies of the network. Object orientation provides this necessary transparency as ease of development. Much of Novell's AppWare family, for example, is based on object-oriented technology. Object orientation will provide the necessary capabilities of reuse and customization required in today's business-oriented computing climate.

OSF is exploring extensions to its RPC interface definition language that will add object-oriented functionality. Once implemented, such features will support the Object Management Group's CORBA (Common Object Request Broker Architecture) on top of the DCE infrastructure. Much of DCE's future success will depend on this sort of extensibility, as well as on the success of the organizational management of this collection of enabling technologies. ■

*Michael D. Millikin is vice president of programs for NetWorld+Interop (Mountain View, CA). He is a longtime follower of the OSF technology and process. You can contact him on the Internet at [mdm@polaris.interop.com](mailto:mdm@polaris.interop.com) or on BIX c/o "editors."*

**Object orientation  
will prove to be  
fundamental to the  
rapid proliferation  
of network-based  
applications.**





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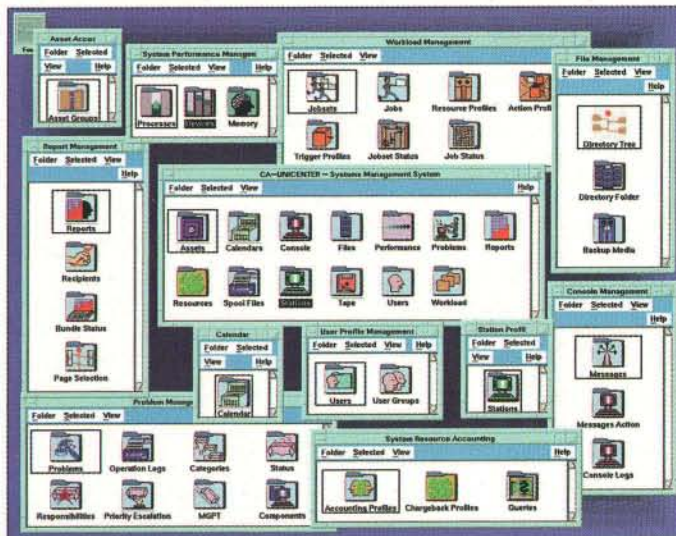
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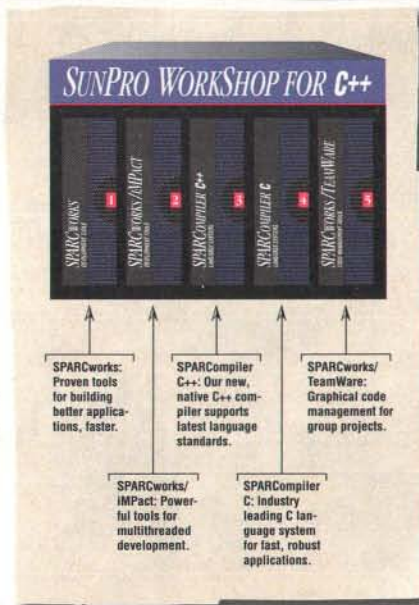
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# Distributing Data

JANE RICHTER

**M**ost business networks fall into one of two categories. The first category includes organizations using a large main-frame database. Users rely solely on IS departments to provide needed information. The second category includes organizations where each user or department has its own collection of data. The organization uses hard copy or replication to share that data. Neither strategy satisfies the need to respond to market changes quickly and cost-effectively in today's competitive business environment.

The solution may be a distributed database. In simplest terms, a *distributed database* is a collection of data distributed, or spread, across many computers. It is one logical, centrally managed database stored in multiple physical locations. By allowing data to be accessed locally and managed globally, a fully functional distributed database can supply reliable information anytime and anywhere. It provides users timely and flexible access to information, it gives them the tools to analyze their data in more meaningful ways, it optimizes the use of computer processor power, and it lets the IS department control the safety and integrity of the data.

The key to a distributed database is transparency. Neither the users nor the programmers need to know where or how the database stores the data. To the user, operations appear to run against one contiguous database. The system alone manages distribution.

What's more, with a distributed approach, users continue using familiar database platforms and products, minimizing the cost of software and hardware purchases and retraining users. A distributed approach also allows users to continue using familiar database applications. A distributed system can often leverage, and in some cases revitalize, existing legacy systems, thus reducing the cost, in time and money, of reengineering database applications and retraining users.

Before you decide to set up a distributed database, take a deep breath. Though simple in concept, distributed databases deal with a number of extremely complex issues. For example, how do you keep data up-to-date when it is physically dispersed? What exists today are a number of evolving, interim solutions.



ROBERT BURGER © 1994

## Not for Everyone

Organizations move to distributed databases for one of two reasons. First, they have outgrown the capacity—in terms of either storage or processing power—of their current database server. This situation requires separating a logically centralized database into a distributed database that spans two or more computing processes. Typically, this is two computers sitting side by side (but it may include geographically separated sites) running compatible DBMS products.

Many of the now available commercial database servers support horizontal scaling, which lets database systems include additional servers or processors. The database system transparently distributes the data and the database processing load. Most top-down operations in the business world today work with a comparably sized or scaled-down version of the original centralized database. This approach ensures transparency while maintaining data integrity and applications compatibility.

Second, organizations with physically dispersed sites, each maintaining its own data, are candidates for a distributed database. A possible solution for this type of organization might be to combine all the dispersed databases into one central database. This approach, however, has several disadvantages. First, a central computer would suffer phenomenal processing demands during peak times.

*continued*

**Distributed databases fill the competitive need to make information available to everyone in an organization**



Second, a central computer would become a single point of failure. Finally, communications costs for remote access to a central computer can be prohibitive.

Instead of a centralized database, a bottom-up integration of a distributed database—combining existing databases running on mixed systems into a single, virtual

distributed database—alleviates these problems. This approach preserves an organization's investment in database software and applications, as well as allowing the data to be stored where it's used most.

Lehigh University (Bethlehem, PA), for example, has embraced the distributed-database technology. Lehigh converted all

three of its mainframe systems to 10 high-end IBM RS/6000 servers and over 140 RS/6000 workstations accessed by thousands of PCs. The network grew from 10 to 30 sites for enterprise data access. Within an 18-month period, Lehigh expanded its system capacity by at least two orders of magnitude and increased the number of

## The Other Challenges

**B**eyond the core technology, you must consider a number of other contributing factors when implementing a distributed database. These challenges encompass issues as diverse as overcoming shortfalls in the supporting technology, interproduct compatibility, troubleshooting multivendor systems, and surviving culture shock.

**Challenge #1** is making everything connect to everything else. Communications networks, both LAN and WAN (wide-area network), are the weakest links in the chain (see "Linking LANs," December 1993 BYTE). Links between remote sites are often slow and costly. Problems with network protocols, WAN bandwidth, and network management and differences between LAN and WAN cultures combine to make implementing this piece of the distributed scheme a true ordeal.

There are plenty of challenges to juggling the standard network protocols, such as IPX, TCP/IP, and AppleTalk, not to mention SNA (Systems Network Architecture) and NetBEUI, both of which need proprietary routing. What's more, regardless of whether you lease dedicated communications lines or use a communications server and public phone lines, WAN access costs money, lots of money. That's the bad news.

The good news is that the network industry is probably the fastest-growing segment of the computer industry. The last year has seen significant improvements in the area of communication: faster network cards, improved compression and data-link switching technology, and the vastly faster, more reliable

asynchronous communications.

Products like Xylogics' Annex Communications Server continue to break new ground in multiprotocol communication between remote sites. LAN companies are working feverishly with products such as Novell/USL's Tuxedo and Banyan's Vines Enterprise Data Distribution network services to provide data-distribution features as an integral part of their file services. All these advances combine to give hope of acceptable network solutions (in terms of both price and performance) in the near future.

**Challenge #2** is overcoming limited standardization between database products. Many vendors (Oracle, Sybase, Ingres, Progress, Informix, Borland, Cincom, and Gupta, to name a few) have ported their software to run on a variety of heterogeneous hardware platforms and operating systems. If, however, you are not dealing with a single-vendor solution, a distributed implementation—specifically, server-to-server compatibility—becomes a serious issue. What's more, many database products follow different database models (e.g., the hierarchical IMS from IBM or Cincom's network model database, Total), posing problems with data access and query translation.

Again, there is hope. Although standards can rarely keep pace with technology, they're beginning to gain ground. On the relational DBMS side, the ANSI/ISO SQL (1986), IBM's SAA/SQL, and the SQL89 and SQL92 standards are a start. The SQL Access Group has recently produced a specification that adds to SQL92 and is at work on parts of the next major

SQL standards release, scheduled for 1996. For distributed data, IBM's DRDA (Distributed Relational Database Architecture) provides a set of standard protocols for access to remote data spanning a variety of platforms previously inaccessible (i.e., DB2 for MVS, AIX/6000, and OS/2; SQL/DS for VM and VSE/ESA; and OS/400). Compliance with these standards ensures increasingly more sophisticated database interoperability and portability.

Middleware products, such as drivers based on Microsoft's ODBC (Open Database Connectivity) standard and Borland's IDAPI engine, insert a set of compatible drivers between the database servers, thus ensuring reliable communication among DBMS programs. Gupta's SQL-Base Server and Cincom's Supra Server offer faster, proprietary middleware drivers for many popular DBMS programs. Many of the second-generation distributed-database products, such as EDA/SQL, also use proprietary drivers as part of their transaction management scheme. Middleware is slow and somewhat limited in scope, but it is still a relatively new technology.

Gateway products, including products and services from Micro Decisionware and Teradata, tend to be faster. Gateways provide often expensive translation links to a variety of popular DBMS products and platforms, including DB2 and AS/400. (Micro Decisionware's Database Gateway for MVS costs a minimum of \$7995 and the Access Server for MVS-CICS runs \$65,000 to \$155,000; an EDA/SQL installation can run upwards of \$100,000.)

For now, limited standardization requires requesting heterogeneous servers



publicly accessible sites by more than 40 percent. What's more, this was accomplished with a comparably sized budget and staff, according to Bruce Fritchman, assistant vice president for computing and communications services at Lehigh.

The university runs its traditional admissions and development databases on

to settle for a generic data set. Short of converting to a single-vendor solution, the alternatives are limited. You get by with the functionality and speed of a middleware solution, accept the expense of a gateway, or violate the distribution transparency rule, bypass the TMs (transaction managers), and write applications specifically for the target servers. Like the network technology, however, this is a rapidly growing field.

**Challenge #3** is surviving culture shock. Traditionally, mainframe, minicomputer, and PC users do not mix. The same can be said for LAN and WAN users. They don't use resources in the same manner, they don't approach problems in the same way, and they don't even speak the same language. With the proliferation of distributed databases, all these users need to cooperate and communicate. Management needs to take steps to ensure that all the human factions of an implementation will work together.

**Challenge #4**—and perhaps the biggest headache—is troubleshooting a distributed database. At the very minimum, a distributed database deals with two computing processes, two operating systems, two DBMS products, a communications network, and a database, complete with applications. Problems can occur anywhere, or in a combination of places. Needless to say, the potential problems progress at an exponential rate as the number of sites increases.

Furthermore, many of these problems involve more than one hardware or software vendor. Luckily, vendors seem to realize the importance of working with their customers, and many provide services specifically designed to help solve these types of problems.

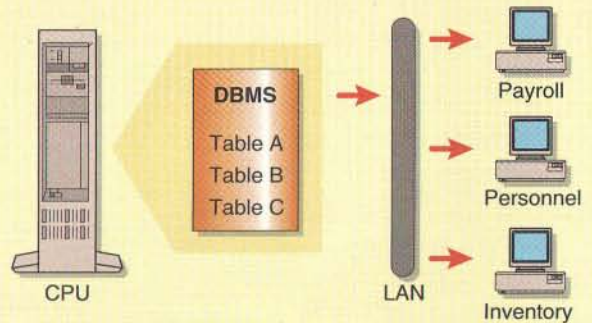
Oracle 6. The network uses a distributed-database service, the Andrew File System from Transarc (see "Distributed and Secure" on page 165), to handle all user access and authentication across its entire network system. Also, Lehigh has developed an internal distributed information-services database to provide E-mail, BBSes, conferencing, library services, on-line forms processing, and pass-through access to national networks to all its users.

"We made some guesses about where the technology was going," says Fritchman. "We took some chances. You don't make progress if you don't take some risks."

The first-generation distributed-database products (e.g., Oracle 6 and Sybase/Microsoft's SQL Server 5.x) generally offer an all-or-nothing approach to going to the distributed model. A first-generation distributed solution requires conversion of *all* your databases, regardless of platform, to run under the same DBMS program. Though most of the first-generation vendors provide support for a variety of platforms, many organizations find the cost of converting to a homogeneous, single-vendor solution prohibitive. Nonetheless, these offerings represent a critical first step toward achieving true distributed-database systems.

Second-generation products solve many of the short-term issues with heterogeneous distributed-database implementations. Foremost among these issues are cross-server and cross-platform data access and security, and integration of distributed and nondistributed systems. New and upcoming releases from the DBMS vendors address many of these issues. Additionally, data-warehousing tools, such as Dynamic Information Systems' Omnidex; middleware, including a horde of drivers, routers, and gateways from companies ranging from Borland to IBM; integrated data-access tools, such as the Personal Series from Uniface and Information Builders' EDA/SQL; and integrated programming tools, such as Cognos's PowerHouse, Open Environment's OEC Toolkits, and Inference's ART\*Enterprise all provide unique solutions for data access, security, and integration.

## A Traditional Centralized Multiuser Configuration



In a centralized system, the data is stored on a central DBMS in tables. Users throughout an organization access the tables concurrently through a terminal or networked PC.

These second-generation products provide more flexibility in terms of which systems and DBMS products can be part of the network. However, many of the technical issues surrounding true transparent distributed databases remain unsolved in today's commercial products.

### Understanding the Technology

Centralized systems store data in tables in a central DBMS. Users access the tables concurrently through either dumb terminals or their PCs via a LAN. Typically, these servers reside on more powerful machines (e.g., a Unix-based minicomputer or a mainframe). Even if run on a PC LAN, however, this configuration still solves many of the problems with maintaining data integrity, eliminating redundant data, and processing changes, deletions, and updates concurrently. Centralized databases also simplify routine services (e.g., security, backup, and maintenance).

Nevertheless, when dealing with remote access, centralized systems are at the mercy of the communications lines. Also, they generally require a dedicated staff—at least a database administrator, and often an entire IS department—to construct, optimize, and maintain the database.

A decentralized configuration has both data and applications located in independent sites. Key to the decentralized configuration is the concept that the data is not a shared resource. Each site maintains its data locally and updates the central database at regular intervals. These sites can share data, but they typically lack the facilities (e.g., mechanisms and procedures for communication and data-integrity controls) to do so. Exchange of data among these sites is often difficult and expensive.

In situations where the data needs to be a shared resource, a distributed multiuser



# 1994 International

## April

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| 12-14 | Munich, Germany<br>Replitech International<br>+1-914-328-9157                             | 25-27 | Cambridge, Massachusetts<br>Seybold 1994<br>Technology Forum<br>+1-617-742-5200<br>fax: +1-617-742-1028 | 2-6   | Stuttgart, Germany<br>Telematica<br>+1-617-235-8095   |
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| 13-16 | Milan, Italy<br>WindowsWorld<br>+49-89-360 86208  | 27-30 | Lausanne, Switzerland<br>Computer '94<br>+41-21-643-2111<br>fax: +41-21-643-3711                        | 3-7   | Vienna, Austria<br>IFABO<br>+431-521 20, x351<br>fax: +431-523-6092                             |
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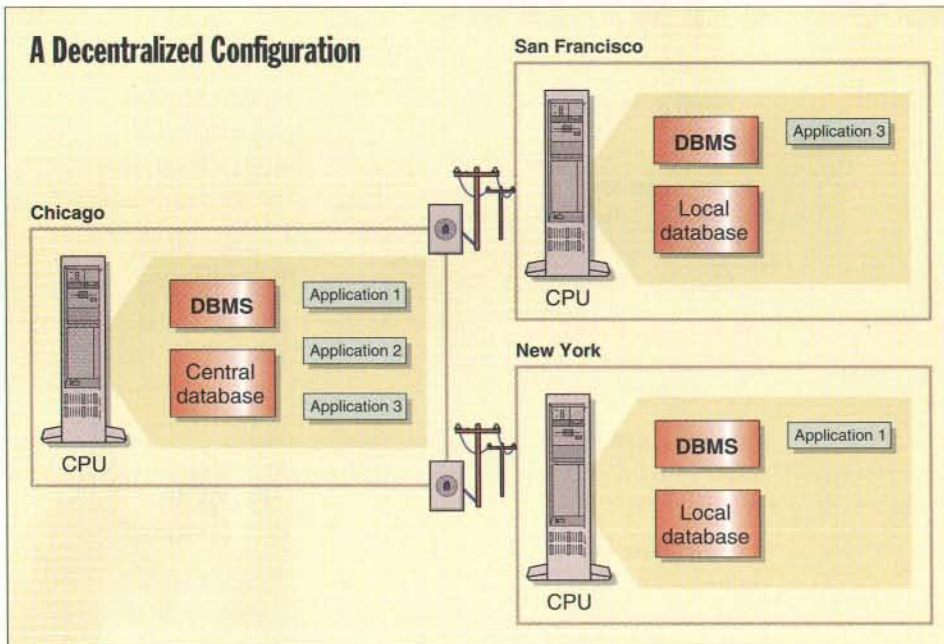
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## A Decentralized Configuration



A decentralized approach assumes that data is not a shared resource. Each site maintains its own data and updates the central database only at regular intervals.

database may be the solution. As with the decentralized model, each site has an independent CPU and DBMS, as well as its own data and applications. Also, each site has an added component to enable shared data: a TM (transaction manager). The TM analyzes a request for data from the user and directs the request to the appropriate server. That server acts upon the request as if issuing it locally (thus distributing the processing) and returns the answer set to the requesting TM. The requesting TM analyzes, collates, and stores the replies from each server, and (eventually) the user sees the result.

### Drawing the Battle Lines

The success of the TM model rests on two critical factors. The first is that the TM must accurately know where the required data tables are. Second, the TM must properly handle change operations across servers; vis-à-vis, it must "synchronize" the data. Although these factors seem straightforward, they represent the real battle lines in distributed-database competition.

There are three general approaches to solving the data-location problem. In the first approach, each TM maintains its own system catalog and has a replicated global system catalog with key information from all sites. Each system is aware of every other system through the global system catalog. The ad-

vantage to this approach: When the catalog changes, the communications networks need to transmit only the changes. The obvious problem, however, is integrity. This type of system must include a master mechanism for tracking local catalog changes and making timely updates to all the replicated information.

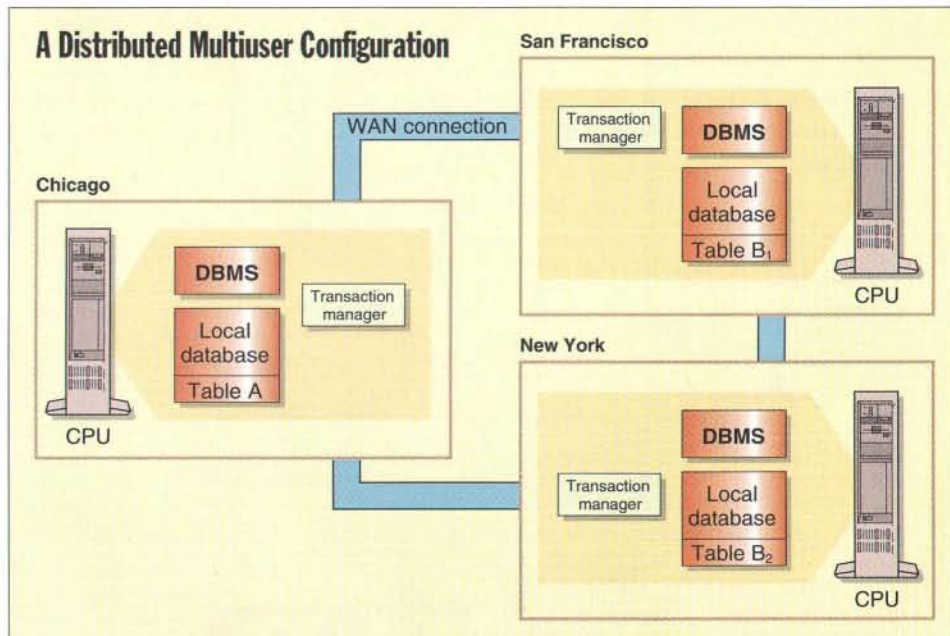
In the second approach, each TM maintains its own system catalog and automatically examines the system catalogs of the

other TMs before beginning a search. Each system is aware of the other systems only through the communications network. This approach potentially shares many of the communications woes of the centralized configuration. It also raises the issue of system failure: If a system is offline, the database is ignorant of that data.

In the third approach, one TM maintains a global catalog, and all other TMs examine this catalog before beginning an operation. This global catalog creates the illusion of a central database: Each site has complete knowledge of every other site. To some degree, a centrally stored global catalog shares all the problems of the centralized-database model: excessive processing demands during peak times, vulnerability to system failure, and the expense (in both time and money) of remote access to the global catalog. On the other hand, when everything's working, it's the fastest and most reliable way to locate and access data.

Cincom's Supra Server circumvents the problem of data location by using its DRDM (Distributed Relational Data Manager) technology as a TM. The DRDM includes a distributed *metadata* catalog as well as rules for handling changes across the system. The metadata catalog includes

## A Distributed Multiuser Configuration



The distributed multiuser model, like the decentralized model, employs independent CPUs and DBMSes at each site. However, the distributed model assumes that data will be shared among the sites. A TM at each site monitors and analyzes requests for data.



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the key information catalog plus information about the physical site of the data. All subsequent database operations (distributed or not) run against the DRDM, thus ensuring accurate data.

Alternatively, Sybase uses its System 10 OmniSQL Gateway interface to provide location transparency. The OmniSQL Gateway centrally stores a single global catalog that maps data and other database entities to their distributed locations. All distributed transactions run through the gateway. Along the same lines, data-warehouse solutions such as Omnidex maintain and use a central repository of indexed data structures and keywords for rapid data location and extraction. The drawback to warehousing is that it is read-only and is typically updated only periodically. Finally, Oracle stores a central catalog of directories (i.e., data locations) but local catalogs of data (i.e., data dictionaries).

The second factor in transaction management, that of properly synchronizing

data across servers, is equally complex. In traditional two-phase commit, one site serves as a controller. The controller site confirms that all sites are ready to post changes, commits the change at all sites, and waits for all sites to confirm a successful commit. If any site fails to confirm, the controller site rolls back all sites to keep them synchronized with the failed site.

In a distributed database, this can be a nightmare. To compensate, vendors have moved beyond the traditional two-phase commit. For example, Supra Server uses a form of retroactive polling to compensate for a failed commit. Once a transaction begins (i.e., all sites confirm availability for a transaction), all involved sites become *transaction partners*. The coordinating site posts a list of partners to each of the participating sites. If a site becomes unavailable for the second phase, Supra Server may, at the discretion of the remaining partners roll back the entire trans-

action, or it may ignore the inactive site and post the changes to the active sites. In the latter case, when the off-line site becomes available, the DRDM alerts it to changes, and it falls to the newly restored site to poll the other partners for the updated information.

Alternatively, Sybase 10 and Oracle 7 (as well as the upcoming Gupta SQLBase Server 6.0) "batch" the changes for the inactive site and post them when the inactive site comes back on-line, using a technique called *store and forward*. For example, Sybase SQL Server, using data replication implemented through the Sybase 10 Replication Server, selects a primary site as the data keeper. All changes to the data run against the primary site. When the primary data changes, the Replication Server automatically and transparently updates the replicated data across the distributed system. If a particular site is unavailable, the Replication Server queues the transactions and posts them as soon as possible.

*continued*

## Defining the Client/Server Distributed Model

There is a lot of confusion about how the client/server model fits into the distributed-database scheme. In any centralized database, the relationship between any of the users (whether they employ dumb terminals or PCs connected via a LAN) and the central database can be characterized as client/server. The client terminals or linked PCs request services and data from the centralized server. What's more, these relationships often exist in distributed systems; a system might act as a server in one transaction and as a client in another. In a distributed client/server relationship, both the client and the server (hardware and software alike) share data-repository and database-processing duties.

A new generation of client/server developers now sees the potential to extend the traditional distributed client/server model to include the networked PC clients. In other words, they want to turn the traditional networked PC-client/server relationship

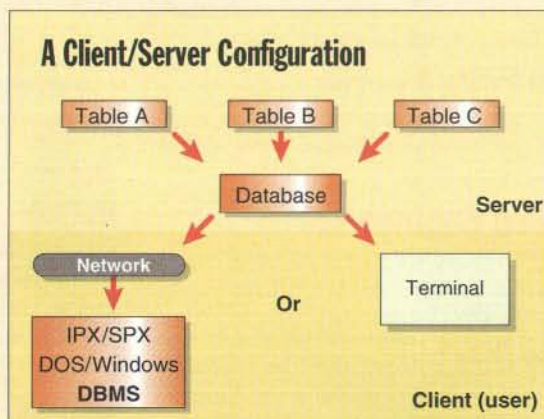
into a full-blown distributed client/server relationship.

The advantages are obvious. Distributed PC client/server systems retain the security and the power of a back-end DBMS while gaining the easy-to-use PC database products as front-end tools. Users have the option of manipulating

the data locally via a DBMS engine.

The real issue with a PC-based distributed database, as with any other distributed system, lies with the transaction management. The PC versions of the back-end products (i.e., Oracle, Sybase's SQL Server, and Gupta's SQLBase Server) can often be difficult to use and also suffer from poor performance. The balance of the PC offerings (e.g., Microsoft FoxBase or Borland's Paradox) simply do not natively include the necessary transaction management facilities to be part of a distributed-database system.

While many of the PC-based database and database development products include tools to ensure data integrity and security, most MIS departments balk at the idea of placing mission-critical data into the hands of users. As the industry solves the problems of data location and transactional management, distributed PC client/server computing will also come into its own.



In traditional client/server database relationships, the terminals or linked PCs act as clients, requesting services and data from a centralized computer, or server. The database resides entirely on the server. In distributed client/server relationships, however, both the client and the server maintain a portion of the database (data and processing) and alternate between acting as client and as server.





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## DISTRIBUTED TRANSACTION MANAGEMENT

DBMS	DATA LOCATION	METHOD
Concom Supra Server	Distributed master catalog (through DRDM)	Transparent read/write (through DRDM); transaction partnering; transparent inter-vendor read/write via DRDM-supported drivers
Sybase SQL Server 10 (through OmniSQL Gateway)	Central catalog	Transparent read/write and store-and-forward (both through Replication Server); inter-vendor read/write through gateways or ODBC
Gupta SQLBase Server 5.1*	Not applicable	Not applicable
Oracle 7	Central directory catalog; local data catalogs	Transparent read/write; store-and-forward; inter-vendor read/write through third-party, X/Open XA-compliant distributed transaction processor

\* Gupta plans to implement distributed transaction management in SQLBase Server 6.0, due this summer.

So far, the industry has found no definitive approach to addressing data location and transaction management. Perhaps this is because no two organizations are quite the same. The "definitive approach" depends on how tightly the organization's

sites must integrate, how accurate the intersite data needs to be, and how much activity the communications network (and the budget) will bear. Until there is a consensus on these factors in the marketplace, all these technologies will likely continue

to grow and prosper in parallel.

Distributed databases, especially those involving PC networks, still have a "pioneer" feel. The first generation of product offerings has come a long way toward making distributed databases a reality. Second-generation products provide more flexibility in terms of the degree to which a business can use the distributed model and in terms of which systems can be part of the distributed network.

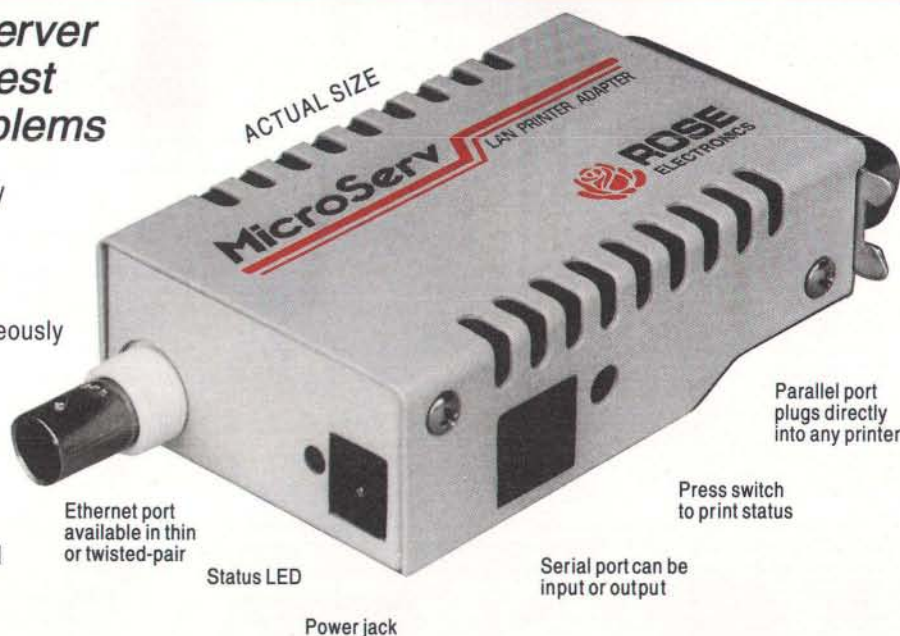
Although many of the technical issues surrounding true transparent distributed databases remain unsolved, the business demand for client/server and enterprise-wide computing will almost certainly continue to drive distributed-database technology to more refined and sophisticated heights. As Lehigh's Fritchman says, you don't make progress if you don't take some risks. ■

Jane Richter is the owner and operator of Database Developers Exchange, a database courseware company in Ben Lomond, California. You can reach her on the Internet or BIX at editors@bix.com.

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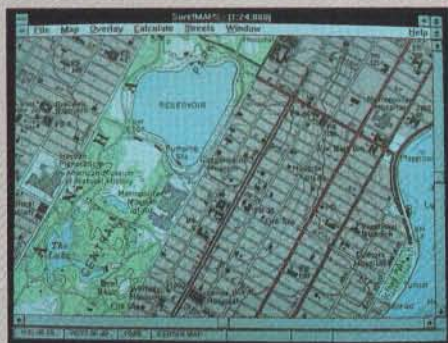
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# Managing Storage

ANDY REINHARDT

**S**torage management can mean anything from data backup and monitoring the health and performance of disk drives to the use of new distributed file systems. A better definition looks past the means to the ends of storage management: to provide users with optimal system performance and minimum downtime while protecting electronic assets.

As an organization makes data more available, it also must more aggressively protect it. Implementing rigorous media monitoring, backup, and file-grooming procedures, for instance, may seem like a burden to users, but it's the only way to ensure that the right data will be there when they need it. In fact, as organizations shift from hosts to distributed models—or as their LANs evolve upward to assume more enterprising functions—they are starting to demand storage management tools as robust and sophisticated as those tools created for mainframes.

The move to distributed computing is thus being matched by a concurrent shift toward centralized storage management. "The notion of distributed computing is a distinct issue from distributed storage," says Bill North, the director of advanced products for Storage Dimensions (Milpitas, CA). "Even in the most distributed environments, you're trying to put your data in a centralized place, so it can be managed."

Of course, the meaning of *centralized* can vary; hard drives and other devices may themselves be physically dispersed in a distributed environment, because storage management is implemented largely at a logical level. Whether data is consolidated on a single giant server or scattered across an array of smaller systems, centralization gives network managers a unified view of storage resources and lets them assert control over otherwise haphazard processes such as drive-performance monitoring and backup.

Asset protection is one of the factors driving storage management into LANs. "Sometimes data at the desktop is as valuable—as strategic—as the data in the server or the mainframe," says Jay Carlson, president of Vinca (Orem, UT), a start-up company pioneering new storage architectures. "The issue of recentralization of data will dominate distributed computing over the next decade." Another ma-

jor driving force is cost-containment. Mike Peterson, president of research-firm Peripheral Strategies (Santa Barbara, CA), says: "The big myth is that storage in PC LANs is free; it may cost only \$1 per megabyte, but the labor cost of managing that is pushing \$8 per megabyte per year."

Fortunately, implementing storage management need not turn into another tug-of-war between MIS departments and freewheeling users. If properly executed, storage management is not only transparent to users but ultimately helps them retrieve data more easily, spares them the burden of looking after their own disks and data, and boosts system performance. Unfortunately, many of the storage management products available today for LANs address only part of the problem, and most don't work together in a unified framework.

## Making the Best Use

Assuming that you already have adequate security, reliability, and physical management, the key challenge in storage management is to make the best use of your available media with the minimum need for human intervention. This is the fertile area in which HSM (Hierarchical Storage Management) resides.

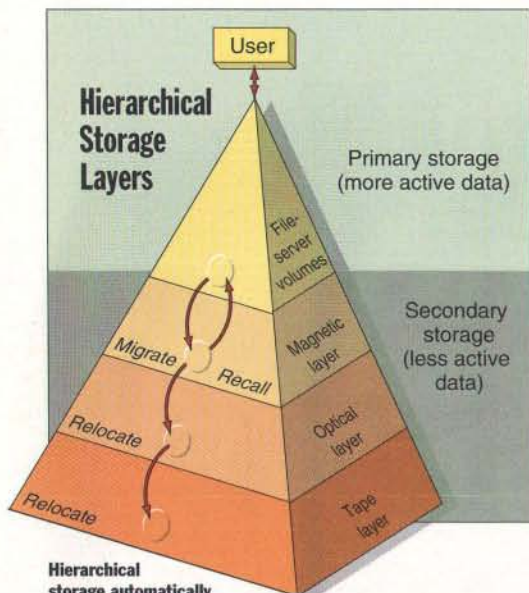
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ROBERT BURGER © 1994

**The challenge of managing decentralized storage is to make it accessible with optimal performance at an affordable price**





**Hierarchical storage automatically shifts older or less frequently used files away from the fastest and most expensive storage media to other media, such as optical or tape, that are slower and less expensive. The physical location of the storage is unimportant: HSM can centrally manage media distributed throughout a network.**

Some people see HSM as an extension of backup and archiving, but in fact, its technology is much closer to that of a cache. As in a cache, the point of HSM is to keep the most current, the most frequently accessed, and the most urgent data as close as possible to the place it is being used, while intelligently discarding that which is no longer needed. The limited space in the cache is at a premium, and not everything needs to be there.

The algorithm that drives backup is based on whether a given file has already been archived and whether it has changed since the last archive. Backups don't delete the source files after copying them to the secondary media. And backup software, which operates in a batch mode, is optimized for backup speed so that the process takes the least possible time and interferes as little as possible with normal system operations. Restores can be done more leisurely because they're assumed to be infrequent.

HSM is nearly the opposite. Migrating files, which involves making a copy and deleting the original, takes place in continuous sweeps, as thresholds are crossed or trigger events occur (i.e., files pass the one-year age mark), and can thus proceed during idle processor cycles with no particular urgency. But demigration has to be instantaneous: If you require a file that is no longer on-line, the load operation ideally ought to take only marginally

longer than it would have if the file was on disk.

The algorithms used in HSM to choose which files to migrate weigh several factors. The primary criterion is usually disk capacity; the administrator sets high and low thresholds, or *watermarks*, and the HSM engine keeps disk capacity between these levels. When the high threshold is crossed, the engine typically looks for the oldest eligible files to move. But to minimize the potential need for demigration, sophisticated algorithms will choose one large but younger file in preference to lots of small but older files.

When a file is migrated off the primary storage medium, HSM systems often leave behind a placeholder, or *token*, that consists of a pointer to the file's new location or an index entry in a server database that tracks the actual location of the file. The latter approach is safer, especially if the database is redundant. Unless the HSM is tightly integrated with the underlying operating system, it's more difficult for it to trap disk calls and redirect them to a separate file manager.

The trickiest problem in HSM is how to handle the situation when you request a file that needs to be demigrated but is too large to fit onto the space available on the hard drive. According to Robert Wight, president of Avail Systems (Boulder, CO), his HSM system accommodates this problem by premigrating the files that are next in line for migration. *Premigrating* means that the files are left on the drive and also copied to the next level down; therefore, if you quickly need the space the files occupy, you can delete the files from the hard drive and restore them later.

Similarly, some HSM systems fail to quickly remigrate a file that has been demigrated because they see it as having been recently accessed, which fools the algorithm into thinking the file is current. Avail's software treats remigrated files instead as if they were premigrated, which means that they go back to a lower level in the hierarchy as soon as the next sweep occurs.

HSM is one of the hottest topics in storage management right now because it solves several problems at once. Migrating old or infrequently used files off onto inexpensive media such as removable optical disks or tape not only frees up space on the primary device for more current or

important files but also reduces the average cost of your storage. "By implementing HSM, you put a stop to your on-line growth and grow into near-line media instead," says Mike Kidd, vice president of marketing for Palindrome (Naperville, IL). HSM is not a substitute for backup but rather complimentary to it.

Another benefit of HSM, says Avail's Wight, is that it increases aggregate network performance by optimizing access time for the data you're most likely to need. "With HSM, the focus of network drives becomes speed, not storage," he says. "Your concern becomes performance, not capacity." In a complex HSM pyramid, you might have ultrafast cached hard drives that are layered above 10-GB single-spindle Seagate drives, which are layered on top of an optical jukebox for near-line storage, which is layered above a tape library.

HSM comes from the mainframe world, where it was used to minimize storage costs that were 10 times what they are in distributed networks, says Robert Hamilton, product manager for tape and optical-storage products for Storage Dimensions. In fact, the relatively low cost of storage in distributed systems has made implementing HSM less urgent and consequently has held back its market penetration, he argues. "Customers aren't asking for it because they're so delighted not to be paying \$10 per megabyte."

Indeed, the low cost of distributed storage has encouraged users to buy more drives rather than to use existing drives more efficiently, and this has ultimately led them to seek HSM for a different reason: as an easy way to implement disk space management. "It's a way of prioritizing your data," says Igor Stenmark, program director for the software management strategies service of the Gartner Group (Stamford, CT). Only 25 percent of the benefit of using HSM accrues from lowered media costs, says Palindrome's Kidd; 75 percent of the benefit comes from reduced management overhead, because you no longer have to worry about space planning and file grooming.

The small number of vendors who now sell LAN-based HSM—primarily Conner Storage Solutions (Lake Mary, FL), which licensed its software from Avail, and Palindrome, whose HSM module layers on top of Network Archivist—argue over the fine points of their implementations, but they are functionally very similar. The basic requirements for an HSM are that



capability:

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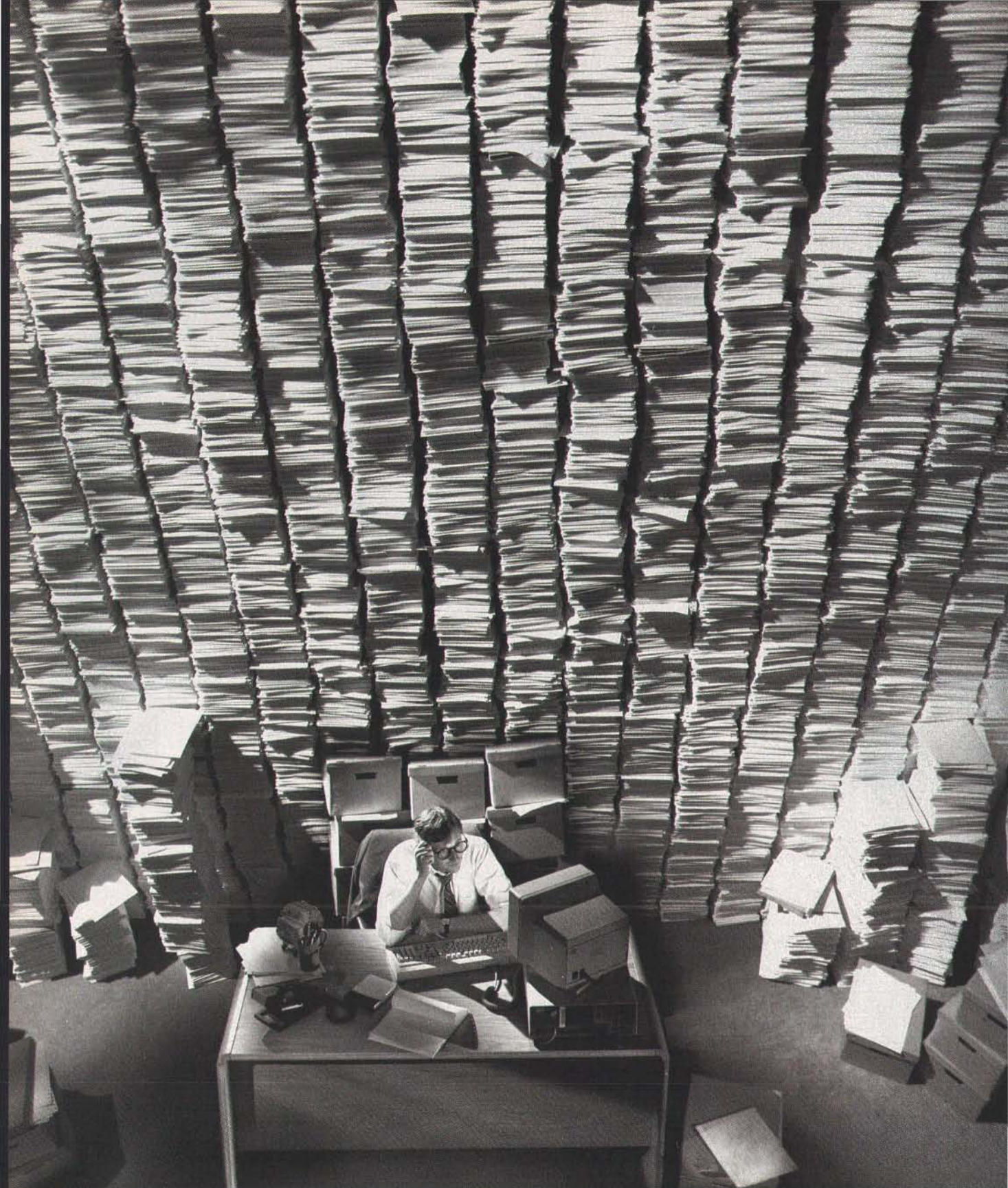
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it support a hierarchy of storage devices, ranging from the fastest and most expensive hard drives to low cost-per-megabyte tape autoloaders. Several analysts consider solutions that support only a fixed number of levels to be inadequate.

Using an algorithm that takes into consideration disk capacity thresholds, file aging, and sometimes file type (i.e., you can set the rules so that certain types of files such as executables or DLLs are never migrated), a rules engine does the following: It watches the drives to make sure they stay within their thresholds; it moves files from one medium to another as necessary; and it tracks file locations in a database. When you try to load a file, the engine intercepts the request and looks it up in the database; if the file needs to be remigrated from tape or an optical drive, it's copied back to the hard disk and given to you.

A function that is intimately related to file access might seem like an obvious candidate for inclusion in the operating system, and in fact, both Novell and Microsoft are moving to support HSM. However, as with other third-party functions that get added to the operating system, their support will consist of a simple "out-of-the-box" implementation coupled with an API that allows richer external products to plug in. "We believe that operating-system companies already have a lot on their plates, and they won't fill this niche completely," says Hinda Chalew, director of strategic marketing for Cheyenne Software of Roslyn Heights, New York.

### What to Look for in HSM

- support for unlimited layers of media hierarchy
- media independence
- a rules engine that supports capacity and time thresholds, exceptions by file type, and forced migration
- migration optimized to create minimal need for demigration
- the ability to remigrate files quickly without manual intervention
- support for data typing when it exists in operating systems
- fast demigration

### Unified View

One problem faced by network administrators is the so-called "swivel chair effect," caused by a proliferation of network management consoles on their desktops. Eliminating multiple displays requires integrating management applications into a common framework. Because of the widespread adoption of SNMP (Simple Network Management Protocol), most inter-networking devices such as hubs and routers can report their status to, and be managed from, a single console. But storage management systems have remained largely isolated.

Legato Systems (Palo Alto, CA) is working on an SNMP agent for its storage management products that will let the products be integrated into Novell's NMS (NetWare Management System) and into enterprise-wide IBM NetView environments. A similar capability is expected from Cheyenne this year. When these capabilities arrive, network managers will be able to monitor and configure storage resources with the same user interface and display they use to analyze network performance, manage

network hardware, and even set up user accounts and permissions.

Intel (Hillsboro, OR) is also moving to integrate support for its StorageExpress, a dedicated NetWare-based backup server, into LANDesk Manager, its Windows-based network management system. StorageExpress now snaps into Novell NMS, and LANDesk communicates via SNMP to high-level frameworks such as NetView. The benefit of linking these capabilities together, says Ed Guzman, strategic

marketing manager for networking storage products at Intel, is that storage events can trigger network management events, or vice versa. For instance, the failure of a local drive could prompt the hub to close access to that node and kick off a backup sequence to another device.

### Future Files

If storage management in distributed environments raises problems and requires solutions that didn't exist in centralized systems, this is only the tip of the iceberg. Just around the corner are fundamental changes in the conception of file systems and documents that may require a rethinking of storage management.

The technological shifts underlying this trend are the emergence of "locationless" network services and the rise of objects and object file systems. In today's computing model, a file stands on its own and resides in a specific place. Advanced operating systems like Windows NT support rich data typing, yet files are still backed up and migrated using conventional attributes such as date/time stamp or archive bit.

But when software moves to a document-centric model, as Microsoft promises to do with the Cairo operating system, the meaning of a file changes. "Smart documents will require us to handle backup very differently," says Alan Adamson, director of product management for Symantec/Peter Norton Group (Santa Monica, CA). "A document will no longer be a single file but rather a book of pointers to text objects, data objects, images, fonts, and so on." Backing up with conventional approaches could cause the linked objects to be separated onto different media, making restoring a nightmare and endangering the integrity of the links.

Obviously, backup and HSM for compound documents will have to respect links, grouping related files together. Microsoft's

### TRADE-OFF BETWEEN PERFORMANCE AND COST PER MEGABYTE

In the classic storage pyramid, access speed is closely correlated to cost. The rarest and most expensive storage types, such as cache memory and flash RAM, cost orders of magnitude more than hard drives or removable media such as tapes and optical disks on a dollars-per-megabyte basis but also deliver data hundreds of times faster. Storage management optimizes the use of all media types.

Medium	Cost/megabyte (range)	Access time
Solid-state	\$60-100	<3 ms
RAID	\$2-10	9-20 ms
Hard drive	\$0.8-2	9-20 ms
Optical (single platter)	\$1-4	50-100 ms
Optical (jukebox)	\$.4-1	15-30 seconds
Tape (single)	\$.4-2	30 seconds to 3 minutes
Tape (autoloader)	\$.05-1	1-5 minutes
Tape (archived, off-site)	\$.05	Hours

Source: Dataquest



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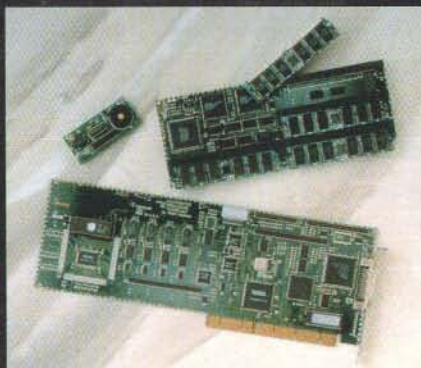
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Greg Lobdell, lead product manager for Microsoft's business systems division, says that this isn't difficult if the operating system supports object management. The tougher problem, he says, is giving storage management routines enough "smarts" that they won't try to back up a huge file over a 9600-bps modem line or make multiple copies of the same application program or repeatedly back up linked objects that have not changed.

Windows NT and NetWare 4 offer locationless network services today, Lobdell says, and "tomorrow, we'll have locationless information access." However, he adds, making storage a more readily available resource, "puts more stress on query mechanisms and tools to help you find it." Changes that occur in the user environment to provide access to the vast wealth of interconnected global data sources will have to be accommodated in storage management systems.

Another big change could come on a more physical level: the emergence of specialized storage hardware that assumes

some of the role now played by software management schemes. "Long term, I see reduced importance for file servers, the explosion of application servers and storage servers, and the rise of dedicated backup servers," says Mike Peterson of Peripheral Strategies.

One interesting development in this area is coming from Vinca. The company is evangelizing an architecture for Storage Access Networks, or SANs, which consist of intelligent storage devices connected together on their own distributed network. The idea behind a SAN is to move responsibility for file access and storage management off the file server, freeing it up to handle user requests. The result could be higher storage bandwidth, improved reliability and manageability, and greater flexibility of configuration.

The combination of distributed, object-oriented file systems and intelligent storage servers will dramatically alter the landscape of storage management, but the net result for users will be greater ease of access to information and greater data reliability,

with less of a need for any human intervention.

Whether you use a GUI or some other scheme for finding and manipulating files, and whether you back up via disk mirroring, RAID, optical jukeboxes, or tape libraries, the ultimate goal of storage management is to ensure that data is there when it's required. By implementing sophisticated backup, HSM, physical resource management, and access control, you are actually making data more available than if it goes unmanaged and has the potential to be lost. And implementing centralized storage management does not contradict a movement toward distributed computing; in the words of Stan Corker, an IDC analyst based in San Diego, "Virtually, the data is distributed to clients; physically, it's grouped at servers; and logically, it's centralized." The network makes these distinctions invisible to the user. ■

*Andy Reinhardt is BYTE's West Coast bureau chief. You can reach him on the Internet or BIX at areinhardt@bix.com.*

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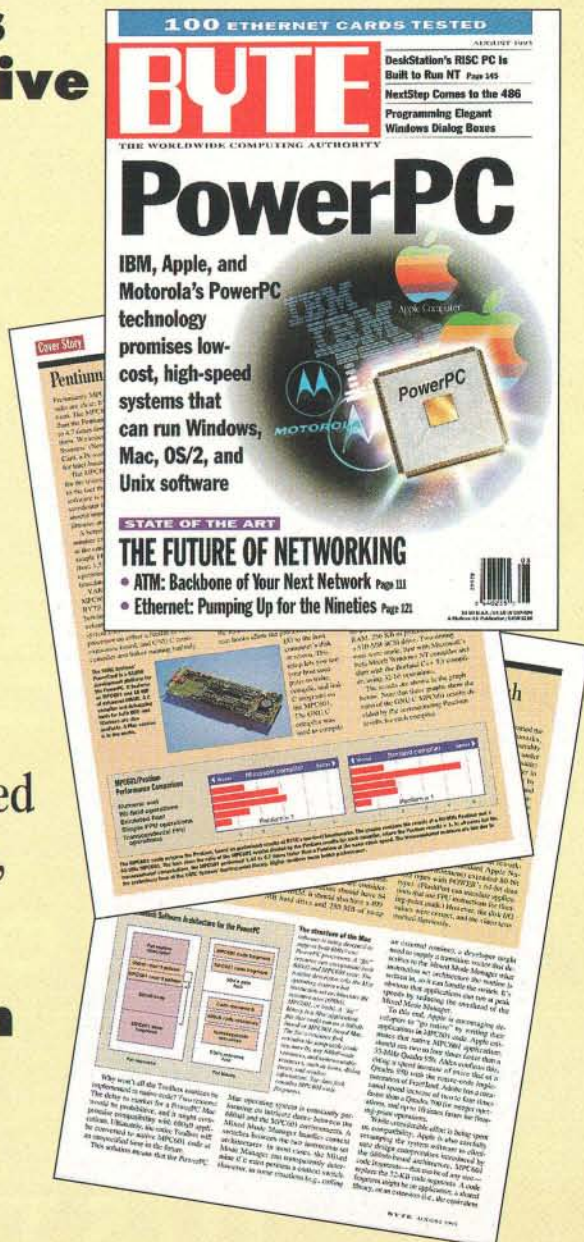
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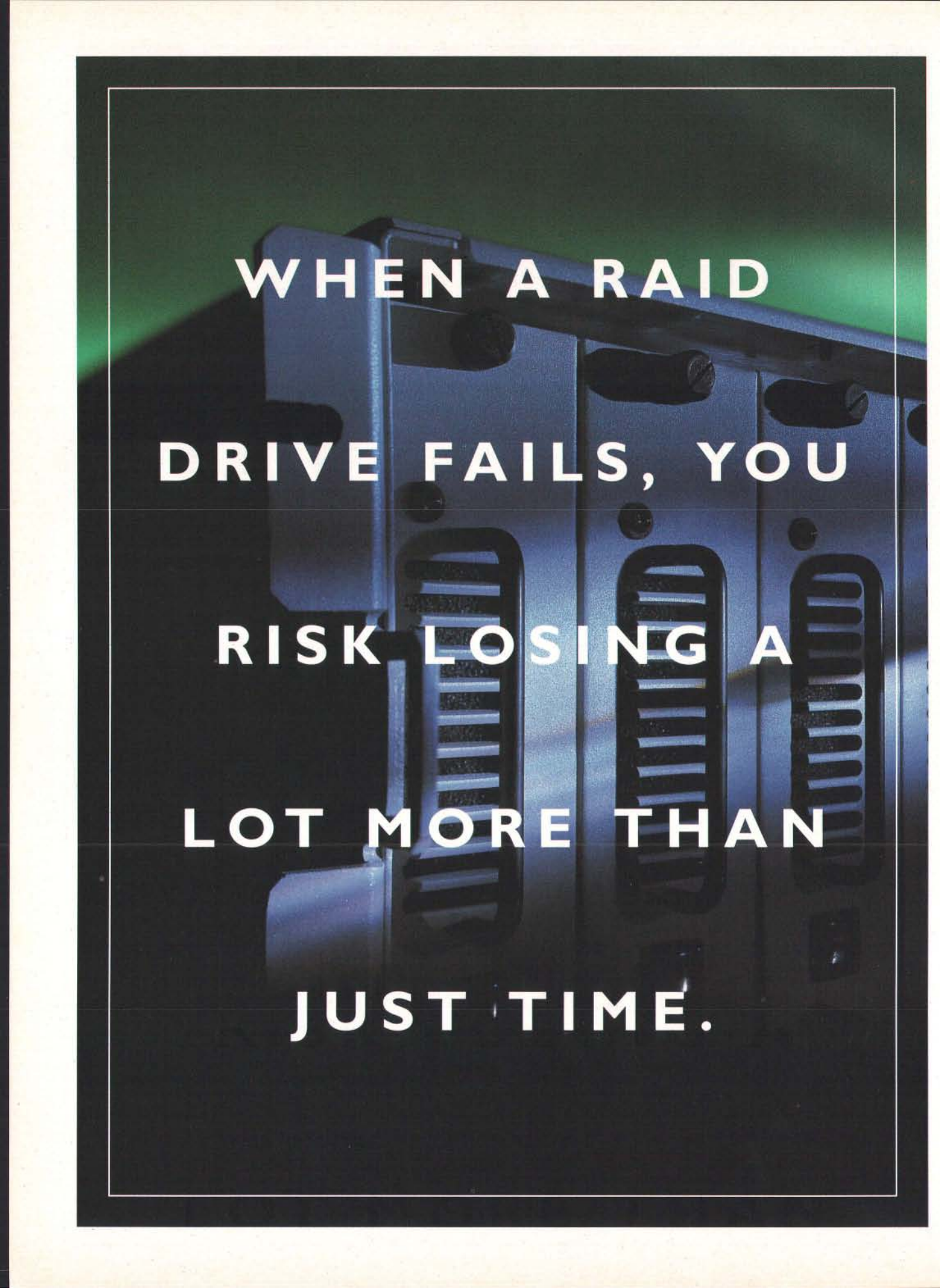


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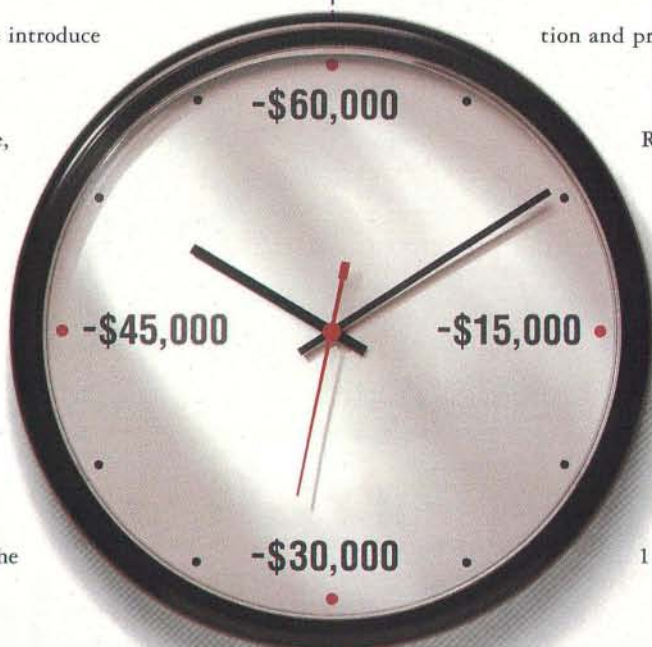
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# Distributed and Secure

RUSSELL KAY

**I**t's ten o'clock. Do you know who is logged on to your network? Really? The fact is, as organizations of all sizes now employ networked computers and distributed systems to handle the bulk of their information-processing needs, security becomes increasingly important.

Just look at how dramatically the workplace has changed in recent years. Computers are everywhere, being used for a multitude of applications distributed throughout an organization's logical and physical structure. Electronic document interchange is replacing paper documents, E-mail is now being used in place of phone calls and memos, voice mail is taking the place of secretaries and operators, complex design and control tasks are increasingly performed using computer systems and software, and sensitive and proprietary data is routinely transmitted from network to network—indeed, from country to country—over phone lines and satellite links.

And what about the nuts and bolts? Were your distributed systems designed from the beginning as integrated wholes? Of course not. They grew via the patching together of existing workgroups, LANs of all descriptions, departmental minicomputers, corporate mainframes, and connections to outside networks. The resulting "systems" may include components using 31 flavors of Unix, plus MS-DOS, Windows (NT and Workgroup versions, too), Macintosh System 7, NetWare, TCP/IP, VMS, and MVS.

Now they're all part of the same giant network, and everyone in the company wants to get at everyone else's resources. And there's no good way of telling what kind of workstations are on your users' desks or what operating systems they are running.

At Martin Marietta Aerospace's technical computing center in Orlando, Florida, systems integrity manager Padgett Peterson watches over the security of 5000 networked PCs. He believes in active management: seeking out problem areas before they occur. "One of the biggest problems I've found is that companies don't even know how many PCs they have," Peterson says. "Some don't even have an approximate idea of how many. So they don't know who can connect to their networks."

This complexity creates many opportunities for abuse, particularly unauthorized access to confidential information.



ILLUSTRATION: ROBERT BURGER © 1994

To protect the integrity of your enterprise's information, you cannot afford to take security for granted. This means controlling access and encrypting telecommunications traffic.

Security is an issue because the majority of today's operating systems—both stand-alone and networked—were developed without any consideration for security. Either they offer no security capability whatsoever, or security and control features were tacked on as an afterthought. Software systems designed from the ground up with security as an important consideration are only now beginning to appear.

## Know Thy User

When you hear the term *security*, the first thing that comes to mind is the password. And for too many organizations, a network's simple password mechanism is as far as security ever goes. Unfortunately, simple passwords offer little protection against unauthorized access; this is particularly true in a distributed environment.

When a connection comes in over a dial-up line, a

**When you distribute information and processing, you also delegate security responsibility. Good access controls, eyes-open administration, and communications encryption can make all the difference.**



customer link, or an internetwork channel, there may be no direct way of knowing who's on the other end of the line. Thus, there is a pressing need to identify and authenticate the user at log-in time—to verify that he or she has been authorized to access your network, and to determine specifically what access rights and privileges this individual will be given.

There are three different methods by which you can check on users at log-in time: by making use of something they know, something they have, or something they are. These methods are described in detail below.

The "something they know" method is typified by the user ID (i.e., the account name) and password, or by those systems that sometimes ask for other personal information, such as a person's mother's maiden name. The idea is that this is knowledge that isn't written down and is unlikely to be available to an intruder. Unfortunately, user IDs are usually easy to obtain, and people sometimes write down their passwords or even tape them to their monitor.

With the "something they have" method, which adds a second level of confidence to the authentication process, you can require that the user possess some physical object in order to gain access—the electronic equivalent of a front-door key. While this object may be as simple as a magnetic-stripe plastic card, the most common solution today takes the form of a random password generator or a challenge-response device.

One type of *token*, as these devices are called, provides a pseudo-random alphanumeric word or number that changes every minute or so and is time-synched to a stored database. This results in a one-time password that's good only at that particular point in time and for only one log-in. The first token that came to market in 1987—the SecurID from Security Dynamics in Cambridge, Massachusetts—used this system.

Another type of token is a calculator-like device into which the user types a number presented as an on-screen challenge by the host; the token generates a response that the user types into his or her workstation. Again, the result is a one-time, nonreusable password. Unless the user has the token with him or her, no log-in is possible. In addition, most of these

devices can also be configured to require that the user input a personal identification number into the token prior to the authentication process.

Obviously, the use of tokens creates certain administrative problems, such as what should happen when an employee mistakenly leaves a token at home.

These problems can be handled by stocking (and carefully controlling) temporary spares, but it also requires attention by a security administrator.

In addition to the tokens described above, a number of so-called *smartcard* security implementations are coming to market; these use a credit-card-size device that contains

a microprocessor and writable memory. Also, NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) has developed a card for generating digital signatures using its proposed standard. This standard calls for the use of a NIST-patented encryption algorithm to allow the unforgeable "signing" of electronic documents to serve as proof that a message actually was sent by the claimed sender.

In addition, there is some future potential for the use in authentication applications of *active-badge technology*, in which users carry a badge that transmits a weak radio signal that is picked up by special receivers when they come within a designated range (generally several feet). The advantage to this approach is that the authentication takes place automatically, with no action on the part of the user and with no need for physical contact between the badge and the sensor.

Currently there are some 15 to 20 suppliers of smartcard- or token-based authentication systems, but one company dominates the market. In the words of industry analyst and security gadfly Winn Schwartau, publisher of the *Security Insider Report*, "There's SecurID, and then there's everyone else."

Systems that require additional hardware—such as a smartcard or a magnetic-stripe reader—have not been very successful thus far, primarily due to the inconvenience and cost of the needed hardware. Adding an extra piece of gear to a laptop system, for example, is often either wildly impractical or out of the question.

One product that attempts to address these problems is Smart Cat from V One of Potomac, Maryland. This smartcard reader is about the size of a mouse and is thus stowable in a laptop's carrying case. It's price-competitive with less-capable magnetic-stripe readers, costing under \$200 in quantity.

Price is likely to be a critical factor in most organizations' choice of security technologies. In the largest companies, which are more likely to have dedicated security professionals on staff and are also more likely to use token authentication, the numbers mount up quickly. You simply can't hide from the cost problem.

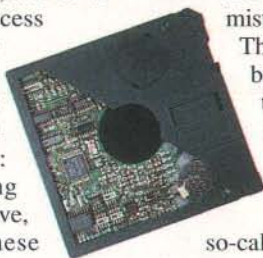
For example, Martin Marietta uses tokens at a cost of around \$50 each. "The problem is," Peterson complains, "they are good for authentication, but they don't do anything else. I'd like to see them used to provide seeds for encryption." Peterson acknowledges that, in principle, smartcards and other, more capable, systems are a good idea. "But the cost of buying a reader is the stumbling block," he notes. "I don't have any problem doing this for 150 computers, but I sure can't justify it for 5000."

One recent product that addresses this objection is SmartDisk from SmartDisk Security in Naples, Florida. On the market for about a year, this \$150 product packages a smartcard into a floppy disk-like unit that can be read by any standard 3½-inch floppy drive.

The final—and most secure—level of authentication, the "something they are" method, involves some unique and unforgeable aspect of an individual's body. In the past, *biometric authentication*, as it's called, has

been based on comparisons of fingerprints, palm prints, or retinal patterns of the eye, or on signature verification or voice recognition. More recently, a system that recognizes keyboard-typing patterns has appeared from Los Angeles-based Phoenix Software International. Another new technology can reportedly read infrared facial patterns from passersby using only a simple video camera for image capture; it's being developed by Neurometric Vision Systems of Deerfield Beach, Florida.

Biometric systems offer the greatest degree of confidence that the user actually is who he or she claims to be, but they are also generally the most expensive to



A standard 3½-inch drive can read SmartDisk's internal circuits.



Watchword II from Racial-Guardata is a challenge-response token.



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implement: At a cost of several hundred to several thousand dollars per reader station, they may be better suited for controlling a doorway or other physical access—where one biometric unit can serve for many employees—than for one-to-one workstation access. Another problem is that many biometric devices carry a high price in terms of inconvenience; for example, some systems can take 10 to 30 seconds to verify an access request. Moreover, resistance is high for many systems that users see as unduly intrusive; people are reluctant to stick a finger or a hand into a slot, or sign their name, or sit still while an optical system scans their eyeball.

### Hiding Authentication Information

One of the principal advantages of tokens is their ability to transmit over a network an access code that cannot be sniffed and contains no reusable information. These are crucial features, but they are not limited to hardware; software systems can do the same thing. In fact, the NSA (National Security Agency) recently placed a large order for what it calls "sniffless password generators" with Secure Computing in Roseville, Minnesota.

With the company's Lockout system, instead of sending a password over the wire "in clear," you send a cryptographic representation of it, using a one-time encryption key. Each time you log in, the password is encrypted with a different key. The NSA will use Lockout in conjunction with its Tessera Crypto Card, a PCMCIA device. Intended for secure messaging within the Department of Defense and for protecting "sensitive but unclassified" data, Tessera is available from several makers. It uses both NIST's Digital Signature Algorithm and the NSA's Mosaic encryption algorithms.

### Kerberos

Kerberos is an encryption-based system designed to authenticate users and network connections (see the text box "How the Kerberos Protocol Works" on page 172). It was developed at MIT's Project Athena in the 1980s and is named after the three-headed dog of Greek mythology that guards the entrance to Hades. Like its namesake, Kerberos is charged with preventing unauthorized access. It does this so well that it is now al-

most a de facto standard for effecting secure, authenticated communications across a network. Kerberos assumes it's in a distributed environment of unsecured workstations, moderately secure servers, and highly secure key-distribution machines.

Perhaps most significant is the fact that the Open Software Foundation's DCE (Distributed Computing Environment) standard uses a variant of Kerberos V5 as

the mechanism for user authentication. Hundreds of vendors have licensed DCE technology, and many are adding additional security features (see "DCE: Building the Distributed Future" on page 125).

Another organization that's supporting Kerberos is the OCSG (Open Computing Security Group), a specialized systems integrator located in Redmond, Washington. OCSG is providing comprehensive Kerberos packages that support a number of different computing platforms, including MS-DOS, the Macintosh, SunOS, Hewlett-Packard's HP-UX, NextStep, and IBM's AIX for the RS/6000.

The OCSG integrates Kerberos with RSA (Rivest-Shamir-Adleman) public-key encryption and other security technology, including Security Dynamics' SecurID token. Other vendors offer Kerberos implementations for DEC's Ultrix and VMS platforms, and IBM says that it is committed to offering Kerberos on its MVS mainframes and OS/2 desktop systems. And, of course, you can get source code from MIT.

For all its popularity, however, Kerberos is not a complete security solution. "Too many people think that Kerberos is the answer," says Brian Redler, director of security and operations for NSCC (National Securities Clearing Corp.) in New York City. He observes that while Kerberos provides user authentication, it does not handle authorization for applications or for transactions within applications. Any determination of access authorizations and rights must be handled by other systems on the network.

Also, adapting applications systems to take advantage of Kerberos authentication—what's being called *Kerberization*—is neither simple nor straightforward; many organizations may find it well-nigh impossible and turn to other solutions. For large corporations, rolling out Kerberos across their enterprise-wide networks may not be finished in this century. Fortunately, it appears that the major networking-related vendors—including suppliers of network management software, operating systems, bridges, routers, multiplexers, and terminal servers, as well as the major computer manufacturers, including DEC, HP, IBM, and Sun Microsystems—

## Security Tips for Distributed Networks

### Awareness

- Establish an organizational policy regarding computer access, information ownership, and user responsibilities.
- Make users aware of their personal accountability for protecting the organization's information.

### Access

- Take extra precautions if you allow dial-in (e.g., use callback modems and permit external access only through a "fire-wall" system).

### Authentication

- Passwords should expire at regular intervals.
- Use tokens or smartcards as random password generators.

### Confidentiality

- Encrypt data transmitted over the network.
- Encrypt stored files for especially sensitive and/or critical data.

### Administration

- You must be able to administer security (e.g., add, drop, or revise access authorizations or access-control lists) from a workstation anywhere on the network.

### Availability

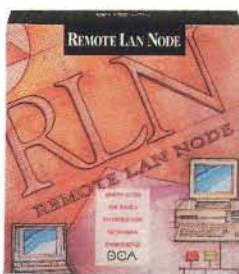
- Prepare for power outages or brownouts with uninterruptible power supplies for servers.
- Ensure that data can be backed up and is recoverable on-line (e.g., via RAID or hot swapping).
- Maintain backup files at remote, off-site locations.
- Make sure that the rest of your systems keep going if a disk or server crashes.



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# How the Kerberos Protocol Works

**K**erberos is a system that uses electronic tickets to authenticate a user to a server. A *ticket*, which is good only for a single server and a single user during a certain period of time, is an encrypted message containing the name of the user and server, the user's network address, a time stamp, and a session key. Once the user gets this ticket, he or she can use it to access the server as many times as desired until the ticket expires. The user cannot decrypt the ticket but can only present it to the server. Nobody listening in on the network can read or modify the ticket as it passes through the network without detection or invalidation.

The Kerberos protocol involves two servers, the Kerberos Authentication Server and one or more TGSes (Ticket-Granting Servers). The steps involved in the Kerberos process are as follows.

**1** To obtain a ticket to a particular target server, the user first requests from the Kerberos Authentication Server a ticket to the Kerberos TGS. This request takes the form of a message containing the user's name and the name of his or her TGS (there can be several).



**2** The Authentication Server looks up the user in its database and then generates a session key to be used between the user and the TGS. Kerberos encrypts

this session key using the user's secret key (a one-way hash of the user's password). Then it creates a TGT (ticket-granting ticket) for the user to present to the TGS and encrypts the TGT using the TGS's secret key (which is known only to the Authentication Server and the TGS). The Authentication Server sends both of these encrypted messages back to the user.



**3** The user decrypts the first message and recovers the session key. Next, the user creates an authenticator consisting of his or her name and address and a time stamp, all encrypted with the session key just generated by the Kerberos Authentication Server.



The user then sends a request to the TGS for a ticket to a particular target server. This request contains the name of the server, the TGT received from Kerberos (which is already encrypted with the TGS's secret key), and the encrypted authenticator.

**4** The TGS decrypts the TGT with its secret key and then uses the session key included in the TGT to decrypt the authenticator. It compares the information in the authenticator with the information in the ticket, the user's network

address with the address the request was sent from, and the time stamp with the current time. If everything matches, it allows the request to proceed.

The TGS creates a new session key for the user and target server and incorporates this key into a valid ticket for the user to present to the server. This ticket also contains the user's name, network address, a time stamp, and an expiration time for the ticket—all encrypted with the target server's secret key—and the name of the server. The TGS also encrypts the new user-target session key using the session key shared by the user and the TGS. It sends both messages to the user.



**5** The user decrypts the message and extracts the session key for use with the target server. The user is now ready to authenticate himself or herself to the server. He or she creates a new authenticator encrypted with the user-target session key that the TGS generated. To request access to the target server, the user sends along the ticket received from Kerberos (which is already encrypted with the target server's secret key) and the encrypted authenticator.



Because this authenticator contains plaintext encrypted with the session key, it proves that the sender knows the key.

are all hard at work Kerberizing their products. A few of these are already up and running.

With its Unicenter multivendor network security and management product, CA (Computer Associates International), one of the world's largest software companies, wants to become a major player in DCE security technology based on Kerberos. Unicenter uses DCE security mechanisms to implement basic authentication, pass-

word management, message encryption, and access-control lists. CA's stated goal is to allow customers to administer Kerberos from their current CA products while also providing security features and functions that Kerberos does not. CA plans to provide Kerberos authentication information to its existing security products, including CA-ACF2 and CA-Top Secret. The first such product scheduled is CA/Unicenter for Unix.

Knowledgeable users seem to agree that Kerberos is not quite here...yet. "To date, I am not aware of *any* applications that have been Kerberized," says Brian Redler. He adds, "Kerberos is potentially half the answer. It's a good system, but it's not enough."

Martin Marietta's Peterson agrees with Redler. "Kerberos is a good technology, but it's not really available to be used at this point," he says. He adds that Kerberos



Just as important, encrypting the time of day prevents an eavesdropper who records both the ticket and the authenticator from replaying them later.

**6** The target server decrypts and checks the ticket and the authenticator, also checking the user's address and the time stamp. If everything checks out, the server now knows the user is who he or she claims to be, and the two share an encryption key that they can use for secure communication. (Since only the user and the server share this key, they can assume that a recent message encrypted in that key originated with the other party.)



**7** For those applications that require mutual authentication, the server sends the user a message consisting of the time stamp plus 1, encrypted with the session key. This serves as proof to the user that the server actually knew its secret key and was able to decrypt the ticket and the authenticator.



Editor's note: This text box was adapted from *Applied Cryptography: Protocols, Algorithms, and Source Code in C* by Bruce Schneier (Wiley, 1993).

provides an authentication envelope, but it still requires the prior exchange of keys. "I would hope that we could have automatic, secure authentication of transmissions," says Peterson.

"Kerberos is out there for real; it's a workable solution," says John O'Leary, director of education for CSI (Computer Security Institute) in San Francisco. "Once the environment becomes large, though, the added traffic of getting Kerberos tick-

ets can be a real issue. If you have plenty of bandwidth and high-speed links, then you'll be OK," he concludes.

#### Single Sign-On

Back when you were hooked up to just one system, you needed only one password. But in today's environment, a user may well need access to several mainframes, a corporatewide network, one or more LANs, special development systems—you name it. Thus, a single user can end up with seven or eight passwords or more. But that's where the password system breaks down completely. No one can remember 15 passwords, all different, none in the dictionary, all unguessable.

Wouldn't it be ideal if you could log on to a system once, and, for the rest of that session, any other systems or networks you connected to would check with a security database to determine your rights, with no need for any further log-ins, interruptions, or passwords? *Single sign-on*, as this idea is called, is the holy grail of access control. And, as with the Holy Grail, people are still searching for it. The main problem comes back to the multiplatform, multiple-operating-system, multiprotocol environment, where single sign-on is extremely difficult to implement.

"If you're on an MS-DOS workstation connected to a Novell network, and you want to access a database running under MVS on an IBM mainframe," says CSI's O'Leary, "something has to sign you on to that mainframe and pass its security checks." But the problem gets worse. "If you want something on a still-different platform, say a VAXcluster, now you've also got to sign on to the VAX. Each of these systems has a different security architecture, different security mechanisms. And something has to do that sign-on and maintain a database indicating what ID on platform A equates to a different ID on platform B," continues O'Leary. And there's more: "The single sign-on mechanism has to update this information at appropriate frequencies—whatever is called for by the mainframe security systems, for example," he adds.

#### Keeping Secrets

Even when access controls are tight and well maintained, you need one further control mechanism to ensure that your organization's information remains confidential while it is moving around the loose confines of your distributed system, or to or through other networks. As long as your

system sends data between users and servers "in clear," it is vulnerable to wiretaps and network sniffers. The use of cellular and microwave links makes it even easier for a technically sophisticated outsider to listen in on your communications and your calculations.

The solution to this problem is well known: encryption. You just transform the signal so that anyone who intercepts it, no matter how they do so, simply can't read it. A variety of commercially available systems use the federal DES, public-key cryptography with the RSA method, and numerous proprietary algorithms. Encryption is relatively inexpensive to buy and can be quite easy to use.

But if encryption's so good, why isn't everybody using it? The problems with encryption lie in the secure exchange and management of encryption keys. This is such a headache that one of the reasons the public-key approach was invented was to overcome the problem of key management by using one key for encryption and another for decryption. This lets the sender encrypt a message using the recipient's public key, which need not be kept secret and is, in fact, usually easily available. The message can be decoded only with the recipient's secret, or private, key.

Public-key cryptography also allows relatively simple implementations of digital signatures, nonrepudiation, and message authentication. These can be achieved with other cryptographic methods, but the public-key approach seems to be the simplest overall.

One major obstacle to acceptance of public-key cryptography is the fact that RSA, the best-known and strongest algorithm, has been patented in the U.S. and thus cannot be used in the U.S. without permission from RSA Data Security of Redwood City, California. Consider PGP (Pretty Good Privacy), a highly regarded public domain cryptographic system that was created by "cipherpunk" programmer Philip Zimmermann and popularized on the Internet. It's used around the world but is currently illegal in the U.S. because it uses the RSA algorithm without a license.

A new stage in encrypted communications may soon begin with the advent of the NSA-sponsored Clipper encryption chip for voice telephones. Clipper's inclusion of an escrowed "law-enforcement" back-door key has generated considerable controversy in the political, libertarian, and academic communities. Less well publicized, but following close behind,





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is Capstone, an extension of Clipper that includes data transmission.

As an aerospace contractor, Martin Marietta's computing activities make extensive use of communications encryption. The company's Padgett Peterson uses Via-

Crypt, a \$100 RSA-based (and licensed) package from ViaCrypt of Phoenix, Arizona. He also has some strong views about the Clipper controversy. "The thing with Clipper is, people react as if Clipper will give them less privacy than they have now.

But they have *none whatsoever* at the moment, so it isn't really taking anything away at all," he says. He also notes that now, if you want any kind of secure phone transmission, your only option is AT&T STU-IIIs (secure telephone units), which

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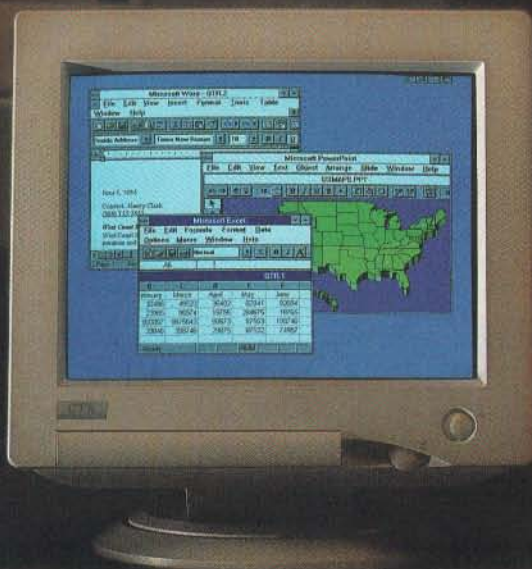
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SECURITY DURING RECONFIGURATION	Users lose access to files during reconfiguration; file-system moves require changes to mount point	Reconfiguration doesn't affect users; files are accessible during moves, and filenames don't change
SECURITY ADMINISTRATION	Only system administrator can set up and maintain protection groups—sets of users with common access rights to specific groups of files	Users can create groups
ACCESS CONTROL	Uses standard Unix chmod command and mode bits on files and directories; offers only read, write, and execute rights to files and directories	Access-control lists allow fine control granularity by groups and individuals; supports read, lookup, insert, delete, write, lock, and administration rights; applied by directory only
AVAILABILITY	No standard data replication	Read-only replication per volume allows users to access a different replica in the event of a server crash
INTEGRATION WITH KERBEROS	Possible, but difficult	Integrates tightly
BACKUP	Standard Unix backup; file system inactive during backup; no cloning means system administrator must perform all restores; can use cacheFs	No system downtime during backup with AFS Backup Server; volume clones allow limited user-controlled restores
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Hor. Freq. (KHz)	30-38	30-50	30-62	30-62	30-65	30-65	30-85
1600 x 1280 NI	—	—	—	—	—	Yes (60Hz)	—
1280 x 1024 NI	—	—	—	—	Yes (60Hz)	Yes (60Hz)	Yes (75Hz)
1024 x 768 NI	87Hz/1	60Hz/NI	75Hz/NI	75Hz/NI	75Hz/NI	75Hz/NI	75Hz/NI
Mac Compatibility	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Flat Square	—	—	—	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Color Match	—	—	—	—	—	Yes	Yes
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cost \$2000 per telephone.

Public law mandates that government information be protected in its processing and storage. DES has been used for this purpose for 15 years, and it has just been renewed for another five years. "People say that, well, it's theoretically possible to break DES if you have a known plaintext," Peterson comments. "But the fact is, no one has yet broken DES, and it's available for free. It's good enough for government work, just as Clipper is good enough for government work."

#### Administration: The Hidden Costs

Whatever type of security you have installed on your distributed systems, you still have to administer it—adding new people, taking off those who leave, modifying rights and permissions as job requirements change. And for many security administrators, the move to distributed systems has created a major administrative headache.

"What's happened as systems have become distributed and information has become distributed [is that] different departments are responsible for different platforms," notes NSCC's Brian Redler. "Mainframe administration is handled by a different group than handles the LANs—in fact, a different person may administer each LAN. And in most cases, security isn't handled by the security department but is out in the user departments, where the LAN administrator is also the security administrator."

Responsibility for communications security is similarly distributed, Redler continues. "Once, all communications came into a central location, where a well-trained network staff monitored it. Now, it comes into the corporation all over, without any central administration," he says.

All this decentralized responsibility can create a security nightmare. Redler, along with most computer-security professionals, believes that security is largely a management issue, not a technical problem. "The first thing we had to get was management's buy-in to a security program, to an overall corporate policy and set of standards. If someone develops or installs a new application," he explains, "we don't want different administrators, each with their own ideas about what security is needed."

Obviously, different systems need different levels of security. A LAN with only routine word processing and spreadsheet applications may not need as much security as a production system with sensitive cor-

porate data. Redler has established a set of security baselines for NSCC to determine how much security is needed for what information and for which systems.

#### Operating Systems and Consistent Security

Another factor that influences security is the choice of operating systems—in particular, network operating systems. Some have more security than others, but the primary problem, from a network perspective, is the need to accommodate multiple operating systems. This raises problems of compatibility and consistency.

"Better, more secure operating systems could have a sizable impact" on distributed-system security, according to Redler. "But it's not that straightforward, either; there are pros and cons to having your primary security in the operating system." He notes that while it would be great to buy a Unix version with a set of security features that you could pick and choose from, it could create inconsistencies that would make overall administration of security difficult.

"If you have one department that uses secure version X of Unix and another that uses secure version Y," he continues, "then each department has its own security system that works differently from the others." Instead, he tends to favor the use of an add-on, third-party security package. "Yes, it'll cost you a little more money, but now you have consistency," he adds.

#### File Systems

Sharing files over distributed systems requires a specially designed file system. Some are better than others, and one of the most popular has gaping security holes. Many Unix-based systems use NFS (Network File System), a file-sharing protocol for TCP/IP networks that was created by Sun Microsystems and is now available from DEC, IBM, Novell, and others.

Using a peer-to-peer networking scheme for low overhead and simplicity, NFS processes every file access request as presented, with no knowledge of prior requests. As a result, it has no built-in record or file locking. NFS sites usually use a "lock manager" program to track file and record locks, but many client programs can simply ignore the lock manager. NFS also has no built-in security, which has led to the saying that NFS really stands for "No File Security." Because of its widespread use, NFS poses some serious security challenges.

The best solution to these limitations

seems to be AFS (Andrew File System), developed at Carnegie Mellon University and currently available from Transarc of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The designers of AFS tackled NFS's problems head-on, and the result is better security and increased reliability. Also, AFS is easier for administrators to maintain, and its greatly improved directory services simplify user access to WANs (wide-area networks).

#### User Awareness

It would be misleading at best to discuss distributed security in purely technical terms without at least mentioning the far larger—and perhaps ultimately more important—issue of user awareness. A certain degree of security can be imposed from above, with technical controls and administrative procedures.

But without user awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities, user cooperation, and user acknowledgment that protecting information is a part of their jobs, then security for distributed systems is a losing battle. CSI's John O'Leary puts it this way: "All the people using our systems aren't being told—or aren't listening to those doing the telling—that, in addition to the productivity enhancements their new systems and connections provide, there come some potential security downsides. People do not realize what the exposures are, and therefore they're not taking steps to mitigate them." O'Leary adds that the special problem for securing the distributed world is the lack of a single point of control. "In the mainframe world, we could rigorously and strictly limit what people had access to," he says.

What O'Leary sees as a disadvantage, however, analyst Winn Schwartau considers a plus. "With a single point of control—in single sign-on as it's usually thought of—you have reduced your security to a single point of failure," he says. He asks what happens if that point fails, and then answers: "I call that 'cyber-stupid'! Your entire system is open."

He recommends caution. "If you're going to go to this, then strengthen that point of failure. Require two forms of authentication at least—something that you know and something you own." ■

*Russell Kay is a BYTE technical editor who has worked in the area of computer and information security since 1981. Before joining BYTE, he was editor of Infosecurity News and Computer Security Journal. He can be contacted on the Internet or BIX at russellk@bix.com.*



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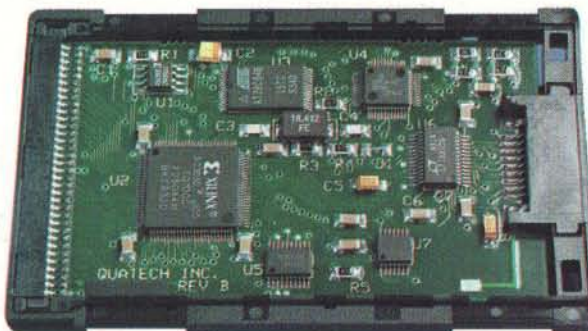
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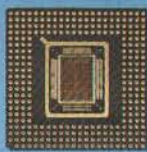


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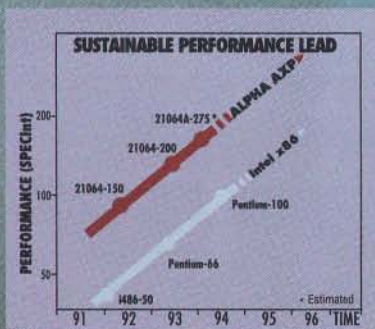


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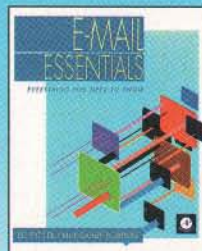
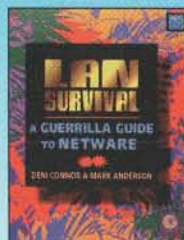
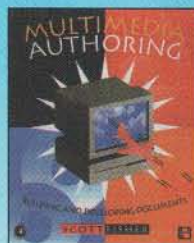
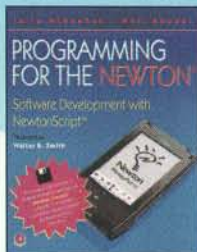
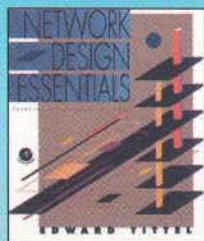
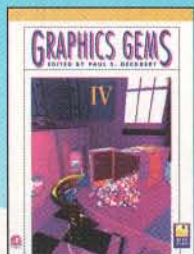
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# The Changing World of EIS

KAREN WATTERSON

It used to be that everyone understood what you meant when you said "EIS" (Executive Information System). An EIS was an electronic briefing book that summarized key sales or production figures for busy executives. Early EISes tended to be custom-built by MIS staffers assigned to top-level executives.

As organizations implement more distributed client/server networks, however, decision-support applications like EIS and the related DSS (Decision Support System) have been forced to adapt. Both end-user data-access tools and client/server development tools need to analyze larger amounts of fast-changing data. This is especially true in transaction-intensive businesses like retailing and finance. And EIS/DSS must now support more than just a few executives.

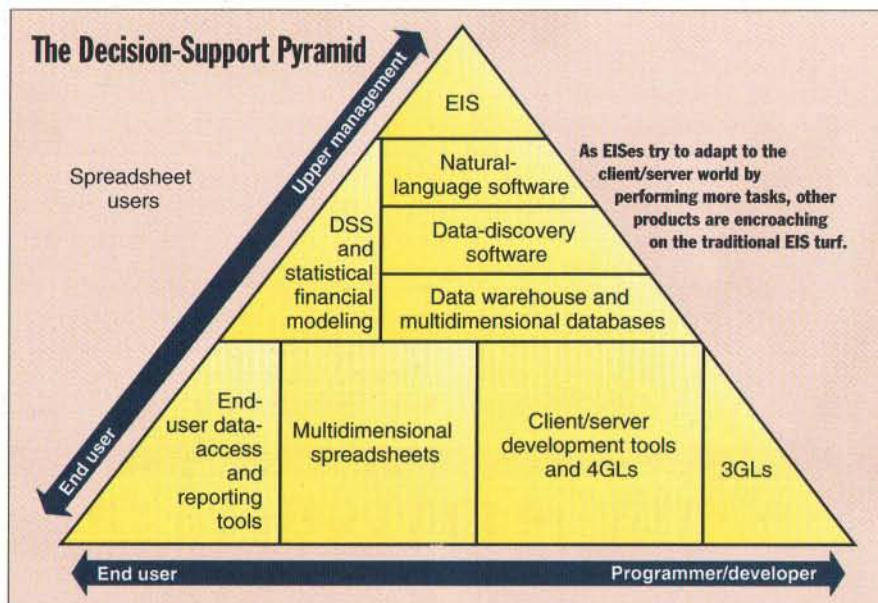
Organizations spend millions of dollars collecting, storing, and safeguarding data. The challenge for today's EISes is to make that data accessible and usable to the people on the network. That means putting the tools to manipulate the data into the users' hands so they can answer their questions and understand their markets better. They don't want to go through the IS department. IS, according to Jeffrey P. Stamen, president of IRI Software (Waltham, MA), is often better being the "system police" than understanding the needs of sales and marketing departments.

The trick is to present just the information required in just the right format without rekeying summary data from massive printouts into spreadsheets. The good news is that today literally hundreds of client/server products provide reporting and querying capabilities, often at a fraction of the cost of classic host-based EISes.

But the classic EIS and DSS vendors aren't standing still. They're adopting client/server architecture, becoming more open and modular, and adding value by targeting vertical markets with special versions of their products. Most emphasize their ability to work with mammoth databases, their understanding of MIS, and their track record.

## How EIS Works

EISes are generally designed with two or three parts: an administrative module, where data access is managed; a builder module, where a developer sets up data mapping and builds a sequence of screens; and a run-time module



that the executive or knowledge worker runs. Sometimes the first two functions are combined.

Data access and consolidation vary depending on the package. Some EISes provide their own data storage system; some only package the data and route it into a more accessible database—usually on a LAN. Some EISes do the data selection and consolidation on the host; others do it at the workstation. Some use third-party commercial middleware gateways or popular APIs like ODBC (Open Database Connectivity); others are less open, offering only a discrete list of proprietary drivers—and often at extra cost. ODBC drivers, on the other hand, are widely available, often bundled with other products. Finally, almost all of today's EISes come with a standard GUI, such as Windows, Macintosh, Motif, or Presentation Manager.

Robin McNeill, director of PowerPlay products for Cognos (Ottawa, Ontario, Canada), identifies six tasks that managers do for which an EIS will be useful: track, flag exceptions, rank, compare, trend-spot, and investigate and explore. The features most EIS tools provide reflect these tasks. They present summarized and consolidated data in both report and chart form, or they allow sequencing of screens to produce executive slide shows. Hot spots that

**Distributed computing is forcing EIS to rethink its traditional host-based ways**



users can click on to get more information and other drill-down techniques help users navigate through varying levels of detail.

Exception reporting is another extremely useful technique managers use to flag data that's unusual or out of bounds. Both unusual and periodic events can be defined to trigger visual or audible alarms or activate an intelligent agent to perform a specific task. Some EIS packages support statistical techniques like regression and correlation analysis, which let you measure the strength of relationships between pairs of variables. Others include a spreadsheet interface, ad hoc queries, and batch processing of reports.

The tasks that EISes track are often mission-critical. For example, Chevron's IT subsidiary built a sophisticated \$750,000 inventory-tracking system for Chevron U.S.A. Products that helps optimize the oil-refining process and minimize idle inventory. Part of that system uses Cognos's PowerPlay to show how oil moved through

the supply chain during a given production week. Don Waddell, a Houston-based project manager for inventory coordination with Chevron U.S.A. Products, says, "We found the best approach for decision-support systems was to have all necessary information available on a summary basis in a consolidated system." Waddell's group used Oracle to create a data warehouse of consolidated data from diverse mainframe data sources, including IMS, Nomad, and VSAM files across an SNA (Systems Network Architecture) network.

In large law firms, time and billing applications are mission-critical. Bob Warrick, senior programmer/analyst with Pillsbury Madison & Sutro, a large San Francisco-based law firm, has built a PowerPlay 4.0 application that lets the executive group of attorneys track billing performance by practice group, location (the firm has 12 offices), and type of attorney. Time and billing information is migrated from a PowerHouse application residing

on a VAX cluster to a PowerPlay database and retrieved via DECnet.

### The Changing Face of EIS

Your choices for decision-support tools are confusing. Low-end (read "inexpensive") data-access and client/server tools and spreadsheets mimic much of the functionality of the classic EIS. Data warehouse and replication packages provide "safe" copies of nonoperational data that users can manipulate to their hearts' content. Smart middleware, such as InfoPump from Trinzic (Palo Alto, CA) or Micro Decisionware's Database Gateways (Boulder, CO), can be programmed to periodically download information to refresh the data sets. Client/server packages with intelligent agents can automate processes such as warning a financial analyst when a key ratio has been exceeded or sending E-mail to a purchasing manager when an inventory-reorder quantity has been reached.

Many organizations are meeting the challenge of providing direct access to corporate data on the mainframe by creating LAN-based *data warehouses* that contain read-only snapshots of host data that's periodically refreshed. This has the advantage of minimizing network traffic, expensive host CPU time, and security headaches. It also provides nonintrusive access to data in legacy systems. Some people refer to this approach as a *client/server system* or a *three-tier architecture*. Sometimes the data warehouse is referred to as a *data-mart* or *staging server*. Data warehouses often contain data from multiple data sources that has been consolidated and summarized. This is not on-line production data; it might be updated daily or weekly as needed. But it's real-enough time for most decision making.

Vendors such as Red Brick Systems (Los Gatos, CA) offer a different vision of a data warehouse. Red Brick Warehouse 2.1 (\$20,000 and up) is an RDBMS (relational database management system) that's optimized for queries rather than data entry. Typical Red Brick clients are firms that need to analyze large amounts of data, like retailers and financial institutions. Red Brick relies on lots of indexes to allow fast retrieval of databases that average over 10 GB of

## THE 12 RULES OF OLAP

**E. F. Codd, father of the relational database, and his associates have produced a white paper listing the 12 rules for OLAP (on-line analytical processing) systems. The list is fundamentally a formula for a successful information system, whether you call it an EIS, a DSS, or a business information system. For more information on the white paper, call Arbor Software, Santa Clara, CA, (408) 727-5800.**

- 1. Multidimensional conceptual view.** This supports EIS "slice-and-dice" operations and is usually required in financial modeling.
- 2. Transparency.** OLAP systems should be part of an open system that supports heterogeneous data sources. Furthermore, the end user should not have to be concerned about the details of data access or conversions.
- 3. Accessibility.** The OLAP should present the user with a single logical schema of the data.
- 4. Consistent reporting performance.** Performance should not degrade as the number of dimensions in the model increases.
- 5. Client/server architecture.** Requirement for open, modular systems.
- 6. Generic dimensionality.** Not limited to 3-D and not biased toward any particular dimension. A function applied to one dimension should also be able to be applied to another.
- 7. Dynamic sparse-matrix handling.** Related both to the idea of nulls in relational databases and to the notion of compressing large files, a sparse matrix is one in which not every cell contains data. OLAP systems should accommodate varying storage and data-handling options.
- 8. Multiuser support.** OLAP systems, like EISes, need to support multiple concurrent users, including their individual views or slices of a common database.
- 9. Unrestricted cross-dimensional operations.** Similar to rule 6; all dimensions are created equal, and operations across data dimensions do not restrict relationships between cells.
- 10. Intuitive data manipulation.** Ideally, users shouldn't have to use menus or perform complex multiple-step operations when an intuitive drag-and-drop action will do.
- 11. Flexible reporting.** Save a tree. Users should be able to print just what they need, and any changes to the underlying financial model should be automatically reflected in reports.
- 12. Unlimited dimensional and aggregation levels.** A serious tool should support at least 15, and preferably 20, dimensions.



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data. Indexes are special files that work like indexes in a book. Instead of pointing to a page, they point to the exact location of a database record, based on the index field. If you index on customer number, company name, contact name, city,

Stop SQL, Teradata, or DB2 databases. Trinzic's InfoPump takes yet another approach, offering intelligent middleware for routing, integrating, and synchronizing dissimilar data. These warehousing, indexing, and routing products package

and consolidate data that's often dispersed among multiple data sources. Ultimately, this minimizes network traffic and makes it easier for the EIS and other software to access the data.

Replication servers are also becoming more widespread. *Replication* is related to the notion of data warehousing, but data warehouses usually contain only a subset of the data, while replicas are usually copies of an entire database. Sybase,

Ingres, Informix, and Oracle sell replication servers that can keep multiple copies of the database up to date, making it easier for users who may be physically dispersed to get fast, local access to data. The industry can thank Lotus Notes for popularizing the concept of replication, since replication of Notes databases is a common activity. Like warehousing, replication makes copies of data conveniently available for access by EISes.

Another force affecting traditional EISes is that, more often than not, today's executives are computer literate. Many of them are familiar with spreadsheets, drill-down techniques, and slice-and-dice techniques for data exploration. They may not want predigested summaries.

Even more significant, though, is the trend toward flatter organizations with distributed decision making. It's no longer just executives who need access to corporate data, and, in a sense, EIS as such is really a dinosaur. Line and branch managers need sales and marketing data, and customer-service representatives need access to customer account and credit information. Classic EIS let you build static presentations for upper management. It wasn't designed for interactive, ad hoc exploration of the data. If it gave that illusion, it was thanks to the skill of the programmer who anticipated the executive's needs. "The flattening of management structures," says Frederick Lizza, vice pres-

ident and general manager of Trinzic's Database Access and Connectivity Unit, "makes the limited hierarchical executive information system a relic of the past."

EIS is also feeling price pressure from spreadsheets, which have data access built into them. Spreadsheets have a wide installed base and are the tool of choice for millions of business information workers and decision makers. These users don't want to have to learn another program to do their data analysis. As spreadsheet vendors add more functionality, like pivot tables and multidimensional spreadsheets, EIS products will come under even more pressure. Multidimensional spreadsheets make it easy to answer questions that would be extremely cumbersome in SQL, such as "Give me the top three sales regions based on the percentage change in revenues this year relative to last year."

Associated with multidimensional spreadsheets is a trend that's sometimes called OLAP (on-line analytical processing). In contrast to OLTP (on-line transaction processing), which focuses on order entry and other transaction-processing systems, OLAP includes decision-making systems for marketing, sales, and finance (see the text box "The 12 Rules of OLAP" on page 184). As IRI's Stamen explains, "OLAP is a way of looking beyond transactions to the forces driving them. It can help companies accurately forecast sales in order to better plan inventory and production levels, know where advertising is working and where they're wasting millions of dollars, and determine if their products are correctly priced."

In addition to mainstream client/server and spreadsheet programs, the EIS market is being invaded by special-purpose packages, including statistics packages. SAS (Cary, NC), for example, has a SAS/EIS module. Data-discovery software—e.g., IDIS (Information Discovery System) from Los Angeles-based IntelligenceWare—uses statistical methods to find correlations in data.

The Depository Trust Company is one of the world's largest clearinghouses for the securities industry. Company executives set goals and determine tasks required to meet those goals; managers must then provide periodic status reports so that senior management can monitor progress. SAS/EIS performs this task well because it provides easy access to the firm's DB2 data without duplicating it, according to Khasha Dehnad, manager of decision support and executive information.

## DIMENSIONS OF EIS

The capabilities, implementation, and use of EIS vary widely. The extremes to which this is true are illustrated below.

	SINGLE USER	COLLABORATIVE
Type of report	Canned	Interactive, supports drill down
Data analysis	Internal only	Competitive analysis
Corporate planning	Tactical	Strategic
Cost	Expensive in terms of initial cost and consulting and licensing fees	Cheap enough for deployment on the desktop
Architecture	Stand-alone data-analysis tool	Integrated, part of multicomponent package
Compatibility	Proprietary	Open and modular

and area code, for example, retrieving information based on any of those fields is faster than it would be without indexes. Because of the overhead associated with maintaining the index, on-line production databases can't afford to index on all fields; data warehouses can.

Another firm, Dynamic Information Systems Corp., based in Boulder, Colorado, sells a product called Omnidex that generates indexes in your current databases (in contrast, Red Brick creates a new database). DISC also provides an API that developers can call from Windows front-end tools. Chris Werle, a business systems analyst, uses Omnidex to provide managers at Chicago-based Boots Pharmaceuticals with up-to-the minute sales and order-entry information. He likes the fact that Omnidex reduces network traffic. "Sometimes," he says, "we just want to know how many there are—to do the equivalent of a SQL COUNT. We don't need to see the records themselves at all." The project's success has prompted Boots to begin bringing previously outsourced data processing back in-house to build another EIS for marketing and sales.

Prism Solutions (Sunnyvale, CA) offers yet another angle on warehousing. Prism Warehouse Manager generates COBOL, SQL, and JCL or Script code to move legacy IDMS, ISAM, VSAM, IMS/VS, and COBOL data files into Oracle, SQL Server, Red Brick Warehouse, Non-

*continued*



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## Decision-Support Software

The following list describes some of the available EIS or EIS-equivalent products. For contact information, see the Distributed Computing Resource Guide on page 206.

### Acumate Enterprise Solution 1.0

*Kenan Technologies*

Acumate provides a multidimensional database engine, 4GL APIs for C, Visual Basic, and Excel, and analysis copilots or wizards for help on complex analysis functions. Acutrieve, EIS Browser, and Visual Basic and Excel client tools are optional. Cost: \$25,000 for five users, including all client tools.

### Commander EIS 4.0

*Comshare, Inc.*

This is a multicomponent product featuring Arbor Software's Essbase multidimensional server running on Windows NT or OS/2 (Unix coming), with Comshare's host-based System W available as an option. Desktop tools include Commander Desktop with Execu-View for end users and Builder for developers. Commander Prism (\$599), which supports multidimensional modeling, is optional. Cost: \$85,000 for 25 users.

### CrossTarget

*Dimensional Insight, Inc.*

This multidimensional data analysis and reporting tool set allows users to create reports without using pre-defined queries. Downloads ASCII data from host systems and permits users to access and analyze data from more than 1 million records at a time. Builder compresses, indexes, and links data, and the Diver GUI provides drill-down views. The optional Data Integrator joins dissimilar data. Runs under Windows, NT, OS/2, Unix, Mac, and VMS. Cost: \$1000 average per seat.

### Data Interpretation System (DIS)

*Metaphor, Inc.*

IBM subsidiary Metaphor introduced DIS, a client/server decision-support workbench that runs under OS/2, in 1984. The Global Access for PC module lets Windows and DOS users access DIS as well. DIS can access OS/2 DBM, Oracle, SQL Server, OS/400, Red Brick Warehouse, DB2, Teradata, and SQL/DS data. An optional EDA/SQL Extender module is available, and there is special vertical-market support for retail and health-care firms. Cost: \$20,000 (OS/2 DBM) and up. Additional fees for Global Access and Capsule Services.

### EISToolKit 2.11

*MicroStrategy, Inc.*

This is a set of cross-platform tools for building EIS and DSS for Windows and Macintosh. It includes the Informix Wingz spreadsheet plus its HyperScript scripting language; SQL access; reporting tools, an API, and ODBC support from ClearAccess; and a Q+E API. Cost: \$1995 for EISToolKit Designer; \$7995 per 10-pack for run time.

### Express/EIS 4.5, Data- Server Analyzer, Brand/ Sales Partners for Windows, and Express Financial Management System

*IRI Software*

Express/EIS (for Windows, NT, DOS, or Motif) is a toolkit for building briefings based on Oracle, Sybase SQL Server, DB2, SQL/DS, or ALLBASE/SQL data in the Express Server or available via SQL gateways. DataServer Analyzer (Windows and DOS) targets sales and marketing users and includes predefined reports. The Partners are a pair of vertical applications for packaged-goods companies doing sales or brand analysis. Express FMS is geared toward CFOs, budget analysts, and controllers. Cost: Express/EIS, \$25,000 and up for 10 users; DataServer, \$3750; Express FMS, \$45,000 and up for 10 users.

### Focus/EIS for Windows 3.3 and EDA/EIS for Windows

*Information Builders, Inc.*

Focus/EIS for Windows is an OEM version of Pilot LightShip with extra features, like DDE support. Requires PC/Focus, PC/Focus Runtime (\$199), or Focus Reporter for Windows (\$199), but can access any data that Focus can use. EDA/EIS requires host-based EDA/SQL (call for pricing) and provides connectivity on more than 35 platforms. Cost: \$395 each.

### Forest & Trees 3.1a

*Trinzic Corp.*

This is a Windows desktop decision-support product providing both direct and ODBC access to most data sources, including gateways and Lotus Notes. Includes charting, drill down, alarms, and alarm triggers. Trinzic also sells intelligent middleware in the form of InfoPump and interactive access to legacy databases from InfoHub. Cost: \$695.

Other applications are performing EIS-like functions. Multidimensional databases such as Kenan Technologies' Acumate (Cambridge, MA) store data acquired from external data sources such as data warehouses do. However, multidimensional databases (not to be confused with multi-

dimensional spreadsheets, although both typically include features that support financial modeling and statistical analysis) let developers define multidimensional "views." (RDBMSes are limited to 2-D views.) EIS-like functions are also apparent in natural-language software. With

Natural Language from Natural Language, Inc. (Alameda, CA), for example, once the developer defines the interface, managers can formulate questions in English (supplemented by words in other languages, if desired) rather than in SQL (Structured Query Language, a sort of



<b>Holos</b> <i>Holistic Systems, Inc.</i>	Holos is a complete EIS/DSS for multidimensional modeling. It supports use of multiple rule sets (e.g., pessimistic, optimistic, and normal) for flexible forecasting. Runs under Windows, Mac, MS-DOS (clients), HP/UX, AIX, Sequent, SunOS, VAX/VMS, and OpenVMS (host/server). Can access Oracle, Informix, SQL Server, Ingres, and Rdb data. Holos supports integration with E-mail and real-time data feeds such as news wires. Cost: \$50,000 and up.
<b>IMRS OnTrack</b> <i>IMRS</i>	This financial information system uses Hyperion (Windows) or Micro Control (DOS) time-series engines that support multidimensional views. It can optionally use SQL Server. Executive Forum (\$15,000) can be integrated with Lotus Notes. OnRequest, another \$15,000 option, uses Forest & Trees to gain access to over 20 SQL databases and other data sources. IMRS also sells related financial packages, such as IMRS Forms (\$60,000). Cost: Hyperion, \$125,000 and up; Micro Control, \$95,000 and up; OnTrack, \$45,000 and up.
<b>LightShip 3.3, LightShip Server, LightShip Modeler, Command Center, and FCS</b> <i>Pilot Software, Inc.</i>	Command Center is a host-based (IBM mainframes; HP/UX, AIX, and other Unix systems; VAX/VMS; and OpenVMS) EIS supporting DOS, Windows, and Macintosh clients. The LightShip family is Windows-based. LightShip Server supports multidimensional and trend analysis, charting, and drill down. LightShip Modeler, based on FCS, focuses on financial aspects of decision support. Mapping support for LightShip using TerraLogics' libraries is available. Cost: LightShip Professional, \$49,000 for 100 users; LightShip Server or Modeler, \$45,000 and up; Command Center, \$75,000 and up; FCS, depends on installation.
<b>Omnidex and Omnidex for Client/Server</b> <i>Dynamic Information Systems Corp.</i>	This indexing system provides rapid access to midrange systems, including HP Turbo/Image, DEC Rdb and RMS, Oracle data from HP 3000 and HP 9000, and DEC VAX/VMS systems. It does not replicate data. Omnidex for Client/Server provides an API for Windows. Cost: \$9000 and up; Omnidex for Client/Server, \$2000.
<b>PowerPlay 3.0</b> <i>Cognos Corp.</i>	PowerPlay is a desktop EIS package supporting drill-down and slice-and-dice functionality. It also includes a PowerPlay Transformer that permits multiple views of multidimensional data sets created from either relational or flat-file data. Release 4.0 (due this month) will include Briefing Books for OLE-driven EIS presentations and will combine administrator and end-user modules into a single box. Cost: administrator, \$795; end user, \$695.
<b>SAS/EIS 6.09</b> <i>SAS Institute, Inc.</i>	This Windows-based multiplatform tool features a dynamic data dictionary and tools for exception reporting, forecasting, and variance analysis. It features drill down, tracking critical success factors, and integration with other SAS tools, but it can use data from flat files and SQL data sources as well as SAS data sets. SAS/EIS requires Base SAS (\$940 and up). Cost: \$730.
<b>Prism Warehouse Manager 3.5</b> <i>Prism Solutions, Inc.</i>	Prism Warehouse Manager generates COBOL, SQL, and JCL or Script code to move data from IDMS, ISAM, VSAM, IMS, DB2, and COBOL data files into Oracle, SQL Server, Red Brick Warehouse, NonStop SQL, Teradata, or DB2 databases. Source data can be integrated and transformed, and delta change support is also available. Cost: \$100,000 and up.

Esperanto for relational databases).

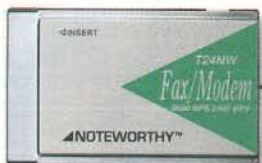
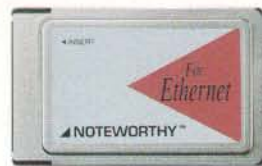
Add these to the traditional DSS and high-end financial analytical modeling packages, and you've got the makings of a highly competitive—and confusing—market. "DSS and EIS systems are on a collision path with traditional reporting and

workstation tools gaining EIS-like graphical features," says Ron Sella, business development manager of the Microsoft Products Division of Information Builders (New York, NY); "DSS and EIS will merge within the next two to three years." Sella points out that Information Builders'

new Focus Reporter for Windows, for example, already incorporates EIS features such as drill down.

Michael Saylor, president and CEO of MicroStrategy (Wilmington, DE), which makes EISToolKit and DSS Agent 1.0 Enterprise, takes a more Windows-centric





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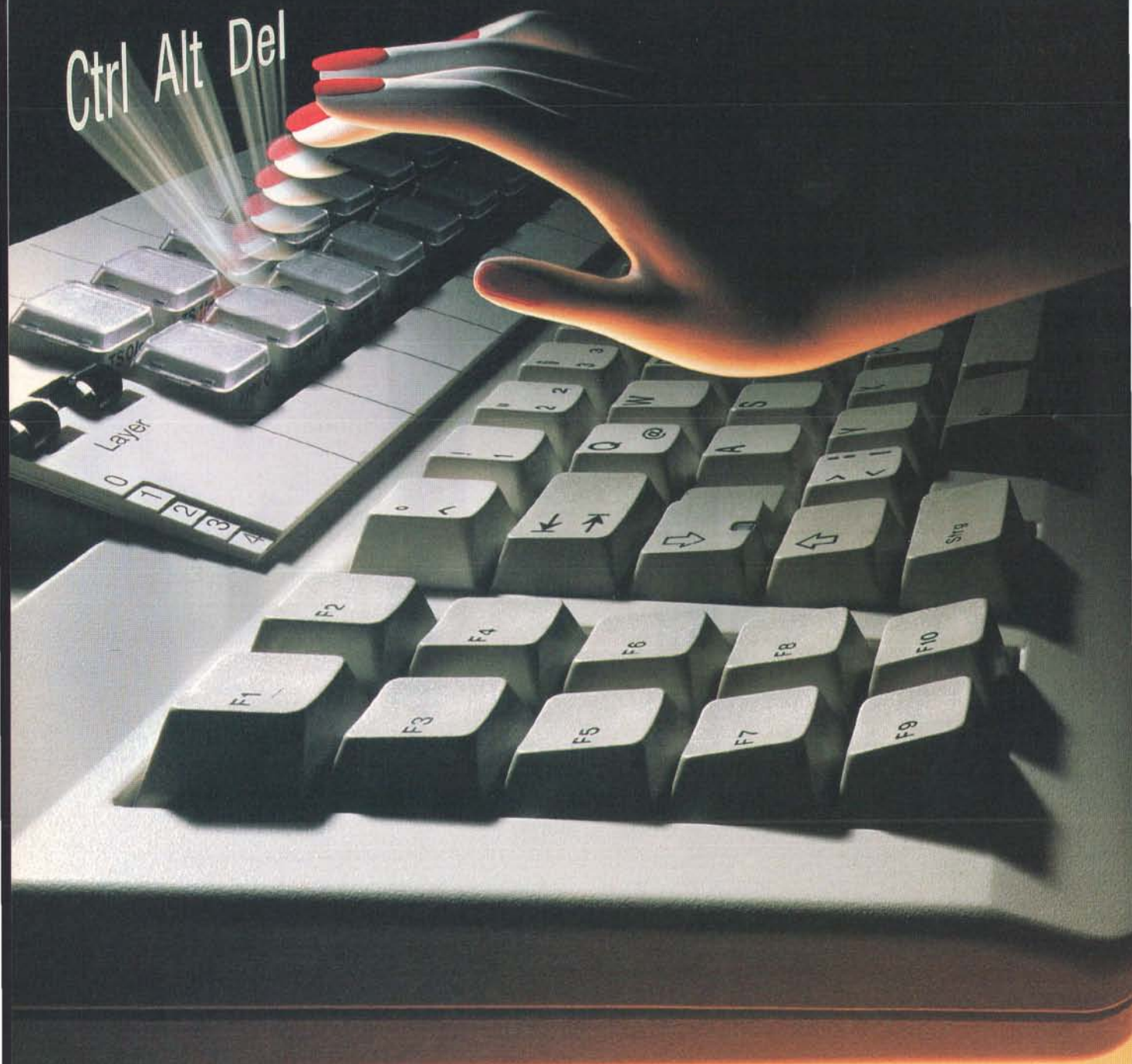
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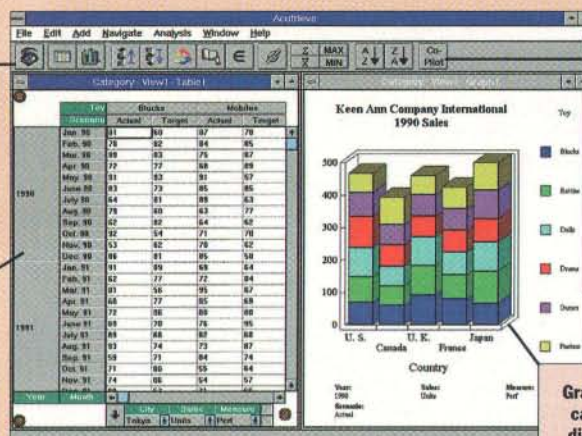
Software development



CAD

Icons for tables, graphs, drill downs, rotations, subsetting, data browsing, and analysis

Data displayed in multidimensional tabular format



Analysis copilots are on-screen helpers that guide the user through analyses such as linear regression or forecasting.

Graphs and tables can be linked to display the same data or made independent.

The Acutrieve component of Kenan Technologies' Acumate Enterprise Solution acts as a gateway to the company's Multiway multidimensional database engine.

view of the market. "Up until 1993, the EIS/DSS market consisted of maybe 30 or 40 players," he says. "Imagine them playing volleyball on the beach. Then along came Bill Gates with this huge bulldozer representing Windows, complete with its APIs and Visual Basic, which essentially commodified a huge amount of EIS. This giant bulldozer was plowing along, scraping a foot of sand off the beach. Some people ran headlong into the bulldozer. Others ignored it and were plowed under. Some tried to escape into the ocean. Others tried to outrun it. Our approach is to look for the opportunities behind the bulldozer. There's a tremendous need for vertical-market applications and other new kinds of tools. Why fight the bulldozer?"

Consultants like Mark Burgess, president of San Diego-based Knowledge Works, would agree. Instead of using a commercial EIS, Burgess opted to use Visual Basic as the engine for a prototype budget-analysis EIS he built for the U.S. Air Force. Burgess's EIS application runs over a WAN (wide-area network) to access distributed data, which will probably reside in a SQL Server for NT database, using Microsoft Access for staged data.

### Common Themes

All the applications competing to perform EIS tasks have some common themes. They are being used by more than one person. They use GUIs, most often Windows. Many automate what amounts to complex SQL queries as well as data consolidation and charting in a client/server framework.

And that's the rub. EIS and DSS are merging, to be sure, but the bloodier battlefield will be where client/server meets EIS/DSS.

Today there are too many players, and that's a formula for industry consolidation and shakeout. Expect to see most EIS vendors shedding the EIS moniker, with new releases of their products emphasizing *enterprise, client/server, multidimensional, business information systems, or analytical processing*. Expect increasingly open and modular systems. Proprietary EIS systems are surely dying, but the death rattle may be a prolonged one, similar to that of COBOL and mainframes.

You can also expect increasing numbers of both classic and new EIS vendors to target special vertical markets. For example, IRI Software already has special software for the consumer packaged-goods market, where its parent company Information Resources does market research. Farther down the pike, you're likely to see intelligent agents that perform processes based on predefined conditions. The logical next step will be to extend automated analysis to automated decision making, according to MicroStrategy's Saylor. After that, you should see what Saylor calls *cybernetic decision making*, where only the best intelligent agents survive in a self-modifying system that is constantly perturbing and sampling its own systems. ■

Karen Watterson is the principal of the Watterson Database Group, a consulting firm based in San Diego, California. You can reach her on the Internet at [111-9390@mcimail.com](mailto:111-9390@mcimail.com) or on BIX c/o "editors."



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# Remote Connections

Off-site users who connect infrequently to distributed networks present unique challenges

MICHAEL NADEAU

One of the most difficult challenges of implementing distributed networks is dealing with remote clients. These clients might be workers in branch offices, people working at home, or mobile personnel using portable computers. What makes them different from other nodes on the network is that they are connected only intermittently.

This presents several problems. First, most remote links are made through a dial-in line via a modem. Phone connections are expensive, so it is critical to know how often a remote user connects and the type of data transmitted.

Second, remote or mobile employees, away from the watchful eyes of the network manager, are notorious for using unauthorized software. Controls are needed not just to ensure that the software at the remote client is legitimate, but to ensure that authorized software can be updated centrally.

Most significant, for both the business and the remote user, the database is never up-to-date. There is always some information at a disconnected site waiting to be reconciled with the rest of the corporate data. When it's finally reconciled, it must be both accurate and available in a timely manner.

## Making the Connection

Remote-access software, such as Symantec's Norton PC/Anywhere and Microcom's Carbon Copy, provide access only to a local node on the network, via a slave/host relationship. They

transmit the screen image of that local node to the remote client and allow for file transfer, but they do not make the remote client an actual node on the network.

Instead, off-site users commonly make the network connection by dialing in to a remote-access server using a high-speed modem or sometimes a dedicated line. A remote-access server acts as a bridge that provides remote clients a two-way connection to the network—usually via Ethernet or token ring. To the network, the client looks like anyone else on the network. The user sees no difference, either, except for slower performance caused by the smaller bandwidth of the remote connection. Most remote-access servers allow for up to eight simultaneous connections. Common features include protocol independence, built-in security, and management utilities.

Remote LAN Node from Digital Communications Associates (Alpharetta, GA) emulates an Ethernet or token-ring NIC (network interface card) in software on the remote client. The RLN product can handle an unlimited number of dial-in ports on a single phone number. RLN doesn't care what kind of network protocol you're running. On the client side, only DOS and Windows are supported, although the company plans to support OS/2 and the Mac as well.

The trusted-domain feature of RLN lets a network administrator set up access to the

RLN server, so that no matter where the user is calling from, he or she logs on using the same security procedures. For example, if a branch manager travels to another company site and logs on to the local network, RLN automatically knows to authorize that person according to the security protocols of that local network.

Shiva Corp. (Burlington, MA) popularized the concept of remote servers and network modems, which effectively function as single-port access servers. Its LANRover/Plus remote servers provide four to eight ports and come with the Shiva Net Manager, which allows remote or local management of the server—an important feature if servers are installed at multiple sites. LANRover/Plus supports the Novell NetWare Bindary user security ID lists. The client part, Shiva Remote, supports MS-DOS, Windows, and Unix.

LANexpress Server from Microcom (Norwood, MA) comes with both remote-node and remote-control software. It is Windows-based and gives you a grid of simple icons representing key functions. You also get the expressWatch management software for monitoring and configuring the system.

The MicroAnnex NCS from Xylogics (Burlington, MA) provides only two ports, but at \$995 it is considerably less expensive than other remote-access servers, which can cost several thousand dollars. It, too, supports NetWare Bindary security, and it comes with Xy-



ILLUSTRATION: ROBERT BURGER © 1994

logics' Fastlink remote-node software. Other vendors of remote-access servers include Cayman Systems (Woburn, MA), Telebit (Chelmsford, MA), 3Com (Santa Clara, CA), and Cisco (Menlo Park, CA).

The above remote-access servers have hardware and software components. Citrix Systems (Coral Springs, FL) sells applications-server software, WinView for Networks, that provides remote Windows access. WinView offers server-based processing for Windows and MS-DOS applications, sending the results only to client workstations. A 486 WinView server supports 10 Windows or 20 MS-DOS users simultaneously accessing applications running on the server. Citrix's Intelligent Console Architecture minimizes traffic by sending only Windows graphics commands and mouse and screen updates over the



dial-in connection. Except for file transfers, Citrix claims near-network performance for remote nodes. WinView also supports remote-access servers from Novell, Digital Communications Associates, Shiva, and 3Com.

Performance bottlenecks over dial-in connections are a fact of life for remote users, but you can minimize them. Using a fast modem—28.8 Kbps or higher—with the latest compression algorithms is the easiest way to boost transmission speed. Ultimately, though, the greatest gains are achieved by the distributed applications themselves. "The trend is to design applications that are bandwidth-sensitive," says Mark Monday, the RLN product manager.

Applications need to be aware of when there is a slow connection to the network and then act to minimize the traffic over that connection. This most likely means keeping more of the data at the server and running more of the application at the client.

Also, performance is only as good as the slowest link. This point is especially critical with notebook PCs. A high-speed modem won't do much good if it's attached to a slow serial port on a notebook. You want to equip mobile clients with notebooks that have high-speed serial ports and modems that can take advantage of them.

### Managing Remote Clients

The tasks that give network managers fits at the local site are doubly frustrating when remote users are involved. Software updates, applications auditing, and usage monitoring require different tactics for far-away nodes.

RemoteWare from XcelleNet (Atlanta, GA) is a suite of client/server software tools for creating and managing applications systems that automate information flow between remote/mobile users and central

information systems. Besides a server component, the RemoteWare line includes the Forms, Report, Document, Desktop, and Mail modules. Using RemoteWare, a manager can update a form or provide new desktop options to all appropriate remote personnel automatically. Similarly, the remote client can send his or her updates to the server as a mail message, and the RemoteWare server software routes those changes to the appropriate locations. For example, an expense report might go to the accounting department or orders to the warehouse.

You also want to know who

But this method does little to prevent remote clients from using unauthorized nonnetworked tools. RemoteWare provides the means to lock out anyone who attempts access with unauthorized software. One product, SEAM (Saber Enterprise Applications Manager) from Saber Software (Dallas, TX), specializes in this task. SEAM is a Windows/DOS software-metering tool that creates a TSR program that resides on the client system. This TSR monitors the software being used according to predetermined rules. SEAM also lets you share licensed software.

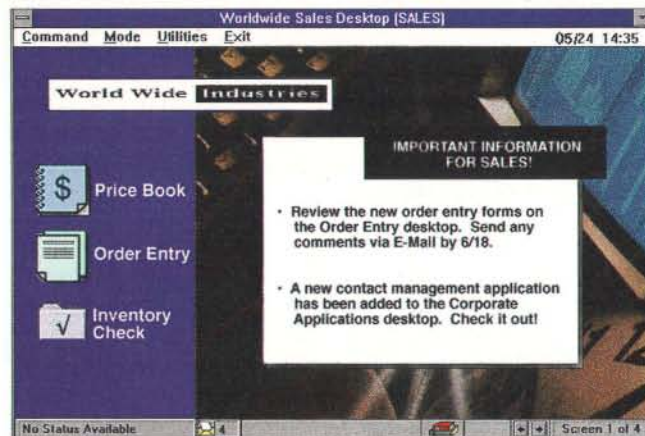
The Equitable Companies (New York City).

To perform a real-time update requires the use of intelligent software at both ends of the transaction. This software analyzes the data, routes it to the appropriate storage location, and updates the database. It also checks to see who else is accessing the same data at that time and acts according to a predetermined set of rules that governs who has priority when multiple clients access the same data simultaneously. For example, client A logged in first, so the software notifies client B that the data is unavailable. When client A is finished, the software sends an all-clear message to client B.

Updating in real time also demands that data be treated discretely, rather than as files. That is, if client A places an order for 10 widgets, only the changes to the database are transferred. Sending that data as a file would require getting an entire subset of the database; another step would be needed to analyze the subset and extract the changed information before making the updates.

DataSync from Datawatch Corp. (Research Triangle Park, NC) is a database-synchronization middleware tool that helps you build the necessary intelligence into your software. As you create a DataSync application, the product lets you define data subsets that will be transferred between the remote clients and the local site. You also set up "synch" rules, which tell the application the specific rows and columns in the database to choose from. These rules can be customized.

DataSync relies on ODBC (Open Database Connectivity). ODBC, developed by Microsoft, provides a common interface for Windows applications to access networked databases. Most relevant Windows applications now provide ODBC drivers, including contact managers like Symantec's



XcelleNet's RemoteWare lets you build forms-based applications using simple icons for access. Updates to both the forms and icons can be sent automatically from a central location.

does or does not call in during certain periods of time. In a sales application, it is particularly important to monitor reports from the field. RemoteWare and the management components of many remote-access servers keep a log of who calls in and when.

It is also difficult to monitor remote users for authorized software. As a manager, you don't want to support different software for each client or be responsible for pirated software used at a remote site. One way to minimize the problem is to tightly weave the remote applications to the local database, and this frequently happens with legacy applications.

### Keeping Up to Date

In a large organization, there could be hundreds of information transfers between remote clients and the local database occurring at any time. It is impossible to make all the information generated at either end available to everyone immediately. At best, you can make it available in real time when the remote client connects, but this is the most expensive route. Some organizations, especially those that deal with frequent financial transactions, have no choice. "We want to be extremely confident that we don't have cross-tier and cross-time-line discrepancies," says Jeff Devlin, a database manager for



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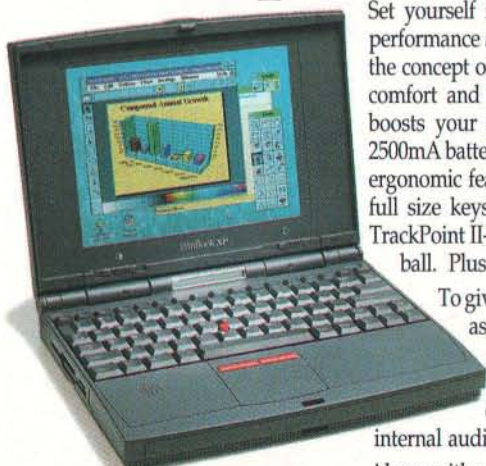
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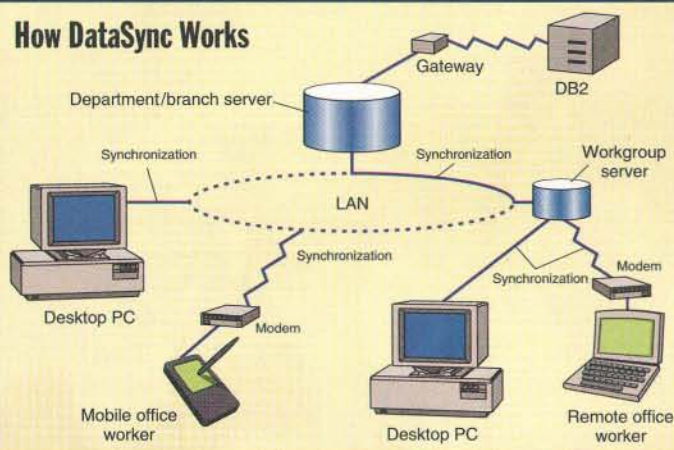


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Circle 308 on Inquiry Card.



### How DataSync Works



DataWatch's DataSync relies on ODBC applications to maintain data integrity. Users permanently connected via the desktop access the server to directly modify the data, sending changes only to the server database. Remote users receive via modem a subset of the data, which is then synchronized with the local database.

ACT and database software like Microsoft Access. This permits more flexibility in terms of the applications re-

mote clients use as front ends. For example, if client A wants to use ACT and client B wants to use Lotus Approach, both

updates and other messages. At the local site, those files are processed batch style—probably after hours—and the data-

base is updated. Cost isn't the only reason to process database updates in batches. "Some legacy applications are not meant for remote access," says Mark Freitas, who's vice president of Microcom. Rather than rewrite the application, it is easier to gather the updates and process them independently before changing the data on the legacy system.

The very nature of distributed computing encourages the use of remote nodes. While remote clients complicate the design of distributed networks, ensuring that all users have access to the information they need more than makes up for the trouble. ■

base is updated.

The more often you dial in, the higher your phone bill. For many businesses, however, frequent updates are not as critical. In these cases, the remote clients can log in once a day, upload their data (usually as a file), and receive their own updates and other messages. At the local site, those files are processed batch style—probably after hours—and the data-

base is updated. Cost isn't the only reason to process database updates in batches. "Some legacy applications are not meant for remote access," says Mark Freitas, who's vice president of Microcom. Rather than rewrite the application, it is easier to gather the updates and process them independently before changing the data on the legacy system.

Michael Nadeau is a BYTE senior editor. You can contact him on the Internet or BIX as miken@bix.com.



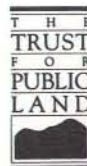
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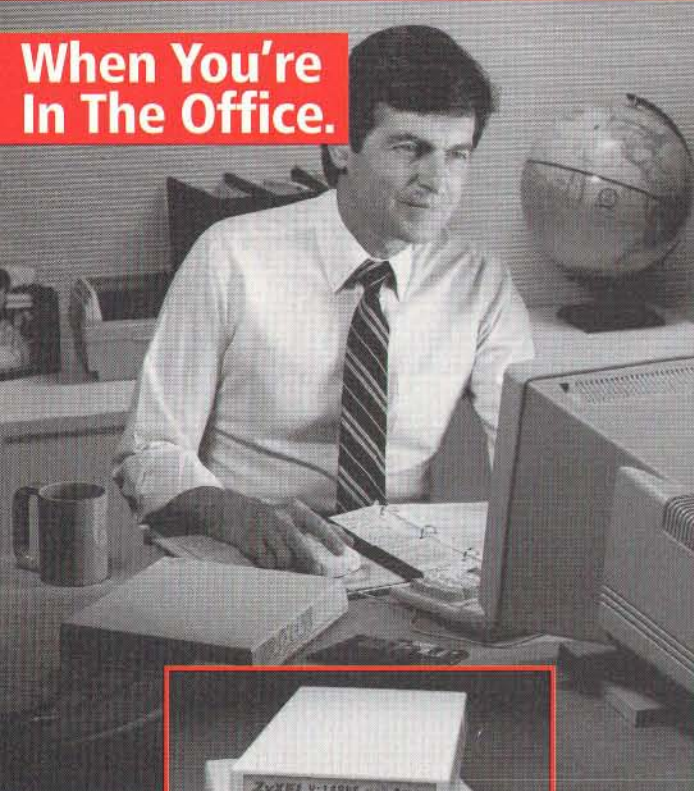
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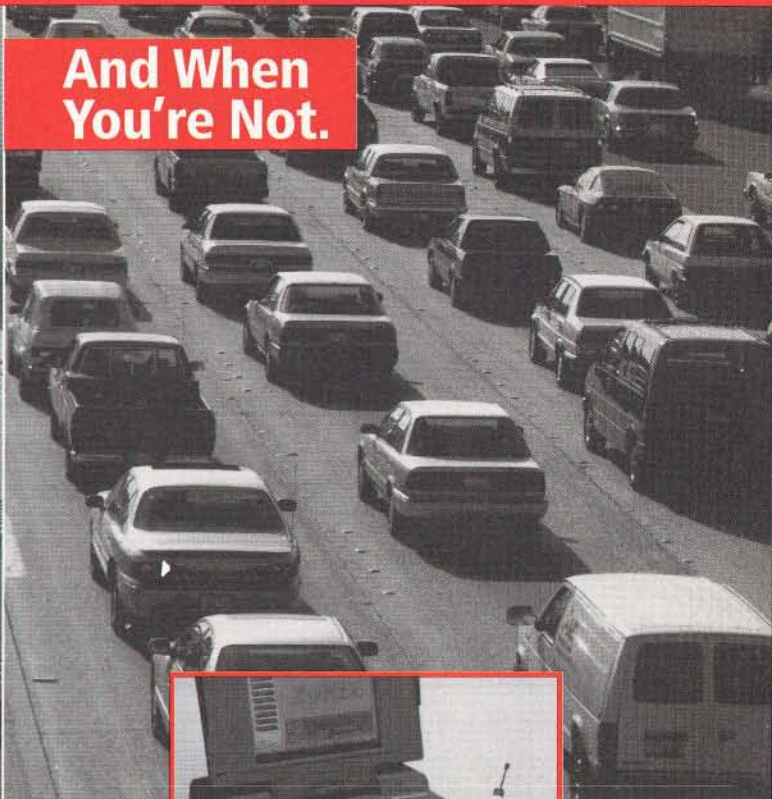
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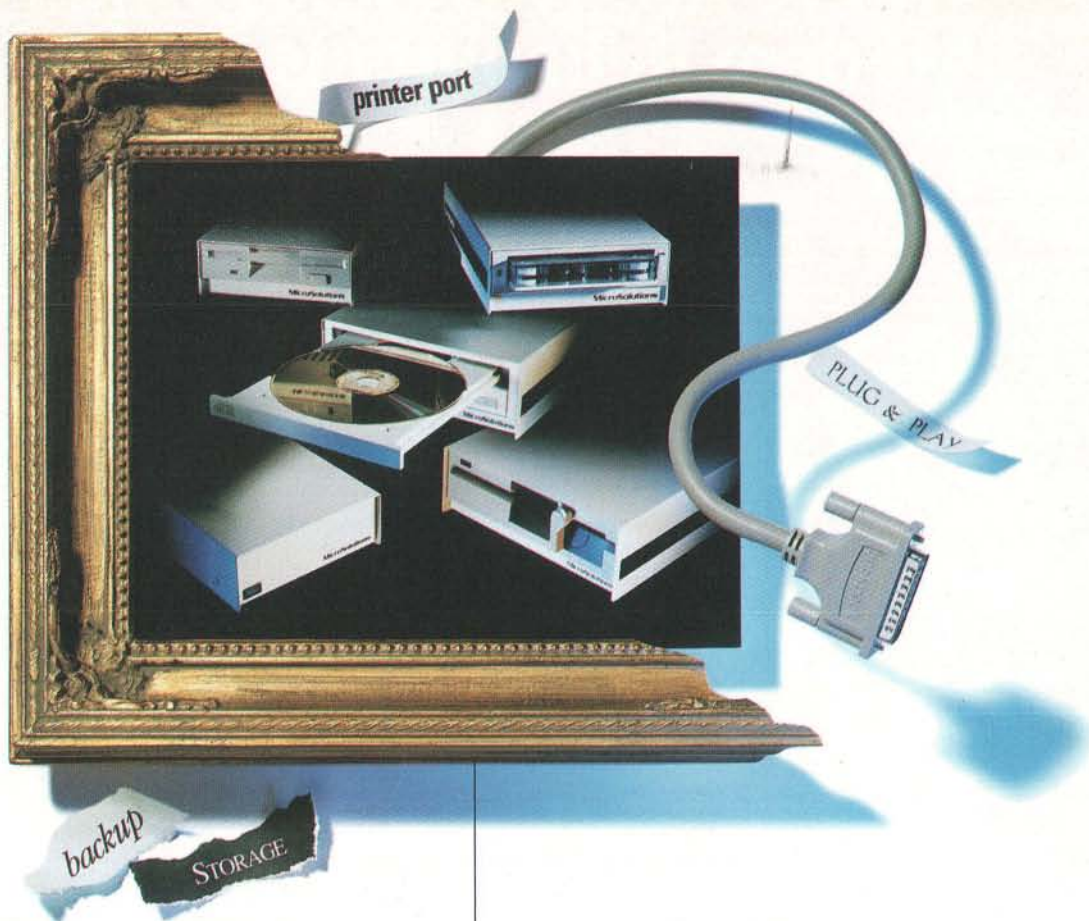
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## Inquiry Numbers 434-620

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## Inquiry Numbers 808-994

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## Inquiry Numbers 1160-1324

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A. What is your primary job function/principal area of responsibility? (Check one)

- ☐ 1 MIS/DIP  
☐ 2 Programmer/Systems Analyst  
☐ 3 Administration/Management  
☐ 4 Sales/Marketing  
☐ 5 Engineer/Scientist  
☐ 6 Other

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☐ 8 Middle-level

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- ☐ 10 Yes ☐ 11 No

D. What operating systems are you currently using? (Check all that apply)

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☐ 13 DOS + Windows ☐ 16 MacOS  
☐ 14 OS/2 ☐ 17 VAX/VMS

E. For how many people do you influence the purchase of hardware or software?

- ☐ 18 1-25 ☐ 20 51-99  
☐ 19 26-50 ☐ 21 100 or more

## Inquiry Numbers 247-433

247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263
264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280
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## Inquiry Numbers 621-807

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## Inquiry Numbers 995-1159

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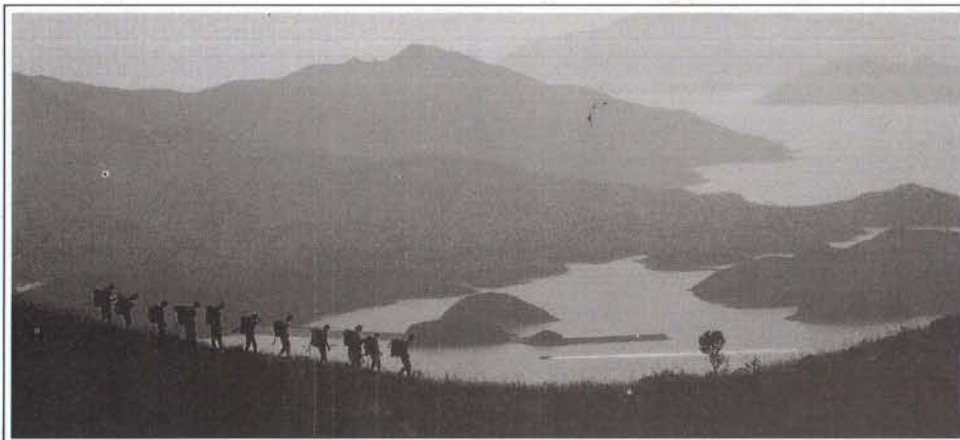
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# Power to the New Macs

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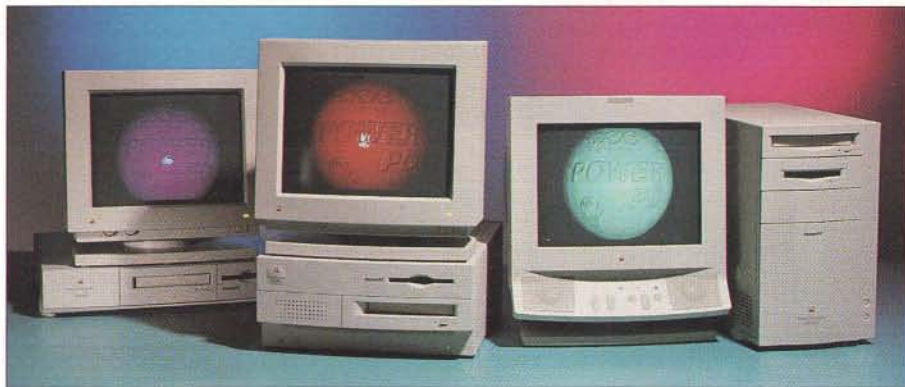
**A**pple missed the Mac's tenth anniversary by only two months when it introduced its new PowerPC-based computers, the Power Macintoshes, in March. Considering the hurdles the Power Mac design team faced, the schedule slip is forgivable. With the new Macs, the team had to implement the contradictory goals of supporting an existing base of CISC software that has built up over the decade and harnessing the throughput of the PowerPC 601 RISC processor (See "Apple, IBM Bring PowerPC to the Desktop," April BYTE). Not only that, but the new systems had to be affordable as well.

The results are embodied in three machines. The Power Mac 6100/60 system has the lowest price at \$1819. (Prices are without monitor and keyboard.) It uses a Centris 610/Quadra 610 pizza-box chassis with a 60-MHz processor, a single 601-specific Processor Direct Slot (PDS) for expansion, and a 160-MB hard drive. An adapter lets the 6100/60 use a 7-inch NuBus board.

The midrange Power Mac 7100/66 inhabits a Centris 650/Quadra 650 chassis and provides a 66-MHz processor, one 601 PDS slot, three NuBus 90 expansion slots that can hold 13-inch boards, and a 250-MB hard drive. This system costs \$2899. Finally, there's the ultimate power-user system: the Power Mac 8100/80. Based on the Quadra 800's successful mini-tower design, it has an 80-MHz processor, one 601 PDS slot, three NuBus expansion slots, and a 250-MB hard drive. It costs \$4249.

The Power Mac hard disks may seem small compared to those in PC systems, but they're ample for Mac applications, which are typically far smaller than Windows applications. Also, the three systems come standard with 8 MB of RAM, built-in Ethernet (16-bit samples at 44.1 kHz) stereo sound, and on-board video that supports 16- or 24-bit color, depending on the model.

The optional AV Power Mac system configuration is essentially a Power Mac with an Apple AV Technologies board in the 601 PDS. The option also includes an additional 8 MB of RAM for the 6100/60



Although housed in Centris/Quadra-type cases, the new Power Macs provide RISC performance at affordable prices. From left to right: the 6100/60 with 60-MHz PowerPC 601 CPU, the 7100/66 with 66-MHz CPU, and the 8100/80 with 80-MHz CPU. Prices start at \$1819 for the Power Mac 6100/60, with 8 MB of RAM and a 160-MB hard drive but without a monitor or keyboard.

and 7100/66 systems and an additional 16 MB for the 8100/80. You need the extra memory to support the voice-recognition and telephony software bundled with the AV system.

If you need to run the occasional DOS/Windows application, another Power Mac system configuration bundles Insignia Solutions' SoftWindows emulator. This configuration gives you SoftWindows and 16 MB of RAM. It also jacks up the price \$300 to \$800, depending on which Power Mac it is.

For owners of Centris 610/Quadra 610, Centris 650/Quadra 650, and Quadra 800/840AV systems, appropriate PowerPC logic-board upgrades are available. For other 68040-based Macs, a 68040 PDS accelerator board with a 601 processor and Power Mac ROMs (\$699) will do the trick. Apple has announced that it will also offer Power Mac upgrades for certain 68030-based Macs, but no details were available at press time.

## Features and Compatibility

I received all three Power Mac systems for evaluation. Apple equipped each with an optional CD-ROM drive and an AV Technologies board. The Power Mac 6100/60 and 7100/66 came with 16 MB of RAM, and the Power Mac 8100/80 had 24 MB.

Two features stood out when I used the CD-ROM drive. First, the drive now has a built-in, motorized drawer that holds the disc, rather than that easy-to-lose caddy. Second, the systems readily boot from the

CD-ROM drive. Formerly, you had to hold down the Command-Option-Shift-Delete keys to get a Quadra system to boot from its CD-ROM drive; now you just drop a bootable system CD into the drive and tap the power key. This is a handy feature for dealing with emergency disk repairs or installing new system software.

I copied my usual working complement of software to these systems and tried them out for several weeks. Software compatibility was remarkable, considering that all the programs were 680x0 CISC binaries now running on a RISC processor. Applications such as Adobe Illustrator 5.0 and Photoshop 2.5, Microsoft Word 5.1a and Excel 4.0, Claris MacWrite Pro 1.0v4, Aladdin Systems StuffIt Deluxe 3.0.6, and Freesoft White Knight 11.14 worked fine.

Even Control Panels and Extensions that heavily patched the 680x0 trap dispatch table continued to work, such as Adobe Type Manager 3.6, Now Utilities' Super Boomerang 4.0.1p and WYSIWYG Menus 4.0.1, Symantec's Suitcase 2.1.4, and Rock Ridge Enterprises' VideoBeep 1.05. In fact, some applications that run erratically—if at all—on most 68040-based Macs worked just fine on the Power Macs.

The systems' performance makes them naturals for graphics-intensive work. For example, Photoshop 2.5 did lightning edits on large 15- to 20-MB, 24-bit color TIFF files. The biggest performance boosts, however, will be seen in applications rewritten in native code. The question, of course, is how many native applications will appear

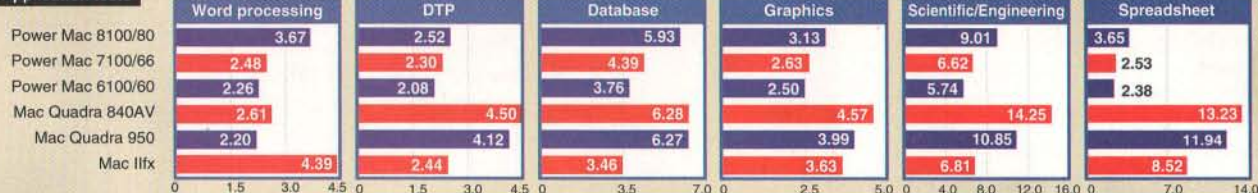


## Power Mac Emulation Performance

### Low-level tests



### Application tests



Results are indexed. For each individual test, a Mac Classic II = 1.0. The Classic II used 512- by 432-pixel screens; other test machines used 640- by 480-pixel screens. For the 68040-based Macs, caches were disabled for the Word Processing tests, and PageMaker 4.2 was used for DTP tests.

Power Mac performance when running 680x0 application binaries ranged from that of a 25-MHz 68030 to better than that of a 40-MHz 68040. Relative speed varies depending on how much the applications use those Toolbox calls that have been rewritten with PowerPC instructions. My tests (not shown) with a beta version of Photoshop indicate performance several times that of older 680x0-based Macs when running native PowerPC programs.

on the market in the next few months. I'll get back to that question shortly.

Insignia Solutions' SoftWindows 80x86 emulator ran a number of Windows applications reliably. The emulator doesn't support Windows' 386 enhanced mode, and it requires about 13 MB of RAM—hence the additional memory on the SoftWindows-equipped systems. The emulator mustered performance between that of a fast 386 and that of a 25-MHz 486SX.

Unfortunately, this sort of speed is barely adequate for demanding Windows applications. Running Excel 4.0 in SoftWindows to process some of the Power Mac test results just taxed my patience. If you need to run a Windows application once in a while, SoftWindows will do. But if you expect to use it often, you'll need the patience of Job.

### Speed Demons

Benchmark testing showed that the Power Macs' performance when running 680x0 application binaries ranged from that of a 25-MHz 68030 to better than that of a 40-MHz 68040. The spread is wide because not all of the Mac Toolbox code has been written in native PowerPC 601 code yet, so some Toolbox code is actually 680x0 code running in the emulator. Depending on the task, program execution might spend more time in native code—thereby gaining a performance boost—or remain in the emulator for a performance hit.

BYTE's low-level benchmarks support this conclusion. For example, most of QuickDraw has been rewritten as PowerPC code. In the low-level video benchmarks on a Power Mac 8100/80, when a

circle fill is done by an algorithm, performance is about that of a Mac IIfx (a 40-MHz 68030). But when QuickDraw is used to fill a circle, performance is as good as on a Quadra 840AV (a 40-MHz 68040). For the screen-intensive word processing application tests, which make heavy use of QuickDraw, the low-end 6100/60 did as well as a Quadra 950 (a 33-MHz 68040), while the high-end 8100/80 bested a Quadra 840AV by a large margin.

The other gotcha is in floating-point performance. Although the 601 is noted for its high-speed floating-point calculations, much existing application software doesn't tap into this capability. Applications that call SANE (Standard Apple Numeric Environment) for floating-point math will see modest performance, since Apple has ported portions of SANE to 601 code. But applications that use only 68881/68882 FPU instructions won't operate at all, because the emulator doesn't support them. These applications either crash or resort to handling the computations in 680x0 code, which bogs down in the emulator.

This situation is also reflected in the benchmark results. In the BYTE low-level floating-point benchmarks on a Power Mac 8100/80, floating-point performance is equal to that of a 25-MHz 68040 when SANE calls are used. You can expect even better performance when 601 FPU instructions are used directly in future applications. However, in the application tests, both Mathcad (which is used for the Scientific/Engineering tests) and Excel rely on the 68881 FPU for fast computations. With no coprocessor, the computa-

tions are trapped in the emulator, and performance plummets, skewing downward the overall application index for the Power Macs. Therefore, some particular application indexes are misleading. Judging from my experience, the Power Macs run much faster than these tests indicate.

If you're interested in running a specific category of application on a Power Mac, check the individual benchmark indexes. Remember that the results are only for 680x0 binaries and represent worst-case numbers. Native applications will run much faster: For example, a beta native version of Photoshop was two to four times faster than Photoshop 2.5 running on the same Power Mac.

### Like Wine, Over Time

The Photoshop results emphasize an important point: To realize the Power Mac's full potential, native applications are essential. Granted, the emulator is robust and delivers reasonable performance, but it's native application performance that makes the Power Mac shine. A handful of applications were native when the Power Macs shipped in March, with more on the way. (See the table "Native PowerPC Mac

### Native PowerPC Mac Applications

Aldus Freehand 4.0	Frame Technologies
Aldus PageMaker 5.0	FrameMaker 4.0.3
Clarisc Impact 1.0	Ray Dream Designer 3.0
Clarisc Works 2.1	VideoFusion QuikFlix 1.1
Dayna Communications	VideoFusion 1.6
ProFiles 1.0	WordPerfect 3.0.1
Fractal Design Painter 2.0	



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## Reviews

Applications" for a partial list.)

Adobe takes an ingenious upgrade approach, thanks to the extensibility of Photoshop 2.5. The company provides a free Photoshop plug-in module that replaces most of Photoshop's innards with PowerPC code. Microsoft's Excel and Word programs should be native by the time you read this.

Developing native applications for the new processor isn't as difficult as it appears. Vendors who have already written their program in C or C++ for cross-platform porting will only have to recompile their programs with a PowerPC compiler. The Power Mac's new core system software also promotes rapid application development (see "The Power Mac's Run-Time Architecture," April BYTE). Also, a slew of PowerPC development tools are appearing on the market, such as Apple's own PowerPC C/C++ SDK (Software Development Kit), Symantec's Think C/C++ 7.0 compilers, Metrowerks' CodeWarrior C/C++ compiler, and Jasik Design's The Debugger (a native debugging utility).

The Mac Toolbox code will evolve over time. Currently, Apple has implemented about 15 percent of the Toolbox as native code. This fraction will increase with future releases of the Mac OS, making current Power Macs run even faster. In an era in which faster desktop computers typically supersede older models in six months, the Power Macs will actually counter this trend, growing faster with new software. It's probably one of the best reasons yet to consider owning a Power Mac. ■

*Tom Thompson is a BYTE senior technical editor at large with a B.S.E.E. from Memphis State University. He is an Associate Apple Developer. Contact him on AppleLink as T.THOMPSON, or on the Internet or BIX at tom\_thompson@bix.com.*

## About the Products

**Power Mac 6100/60** (with 8 MB of RAM, 250-MB hard drive, AV Technologies board, and CD-ROM).....\$2599

**Power Mac 7100/66** (with 8 MB of RAM, 500-MB hard drive, AV Technologies board, and CD-ROM).....\$3989

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**Power Mac logic-board upgrades** for Centris 610/Quadra 610, Centris 650/Quadra 650, and Quadra 800/840AV systems:

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# Scheduling Across the Enterprise

**Sophisticated group scheduling—across platforms and across organizations—has arrived on the desktop**

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**P**ulling together a meeting involving a large group of people, especially across different departments and geographic locations, can be extremely tedious and frustrating. If you don't think so, then you probably have someone doing the job for you. Group-scheduling software relieves some of the tedium of corporatewide scheduling by accessing the combined calendars of all the people across an organization. A group scheduler can find a time when all meeting attendees are available, reserve a conference room and audiovisual equipment, notify all attendees of the time and place of the meeting, and update individual calendars automatically. And all this is accomplished by a few simple mouse-clicks.

Even though group schedulers look very much like personal calendar programs, shared access adds an order of complexity to the scheduling process. Group schedulers coordinate events that involve people and resources throughout the entire enterprise, so the communications requirements of group schedulers are similar to those of enterprise-wide mail systems. Group schedulers must share meeting-request messages and information about each individual's schedule without invading people's privacy.

## Enterprise-Wide Scheduling

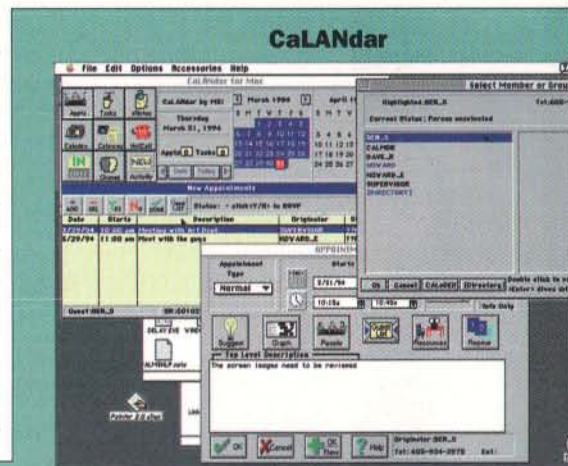
All the group schedulers we review here let you view your schedule by the day, week, and month. You can also maintain a personal to-do list, as well as send and receive messages. Most important, these packages let you negotiate and coordinate meetings with your coworkers and clients. In addition to tracking meeting attendees, these group schedulers reserve and track resources such as a meeting room and an overhead projector.

We looked only at group schedulers that had Macintosh and Windows clients available at the time of our evaluation. Some products, including PowerCore International's popular Network

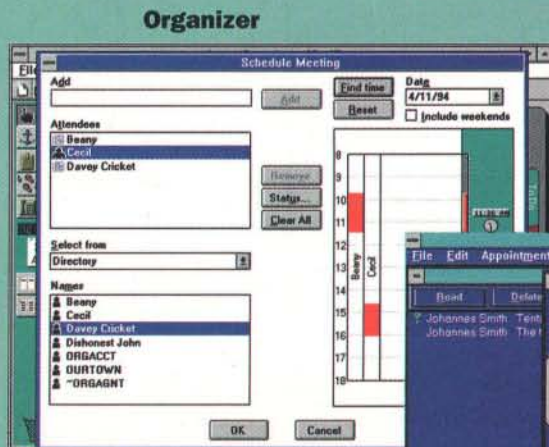
Scheduler, were preparing Macintosh clients but were unable to ship us software in time for this review. We evaluated each of these packages for cross-platform and enterprise-wide support, ease of installation and use, feature set, and management functions.

The group schedulers share some key features (see the text box "What to Look For in an Enterprise-Wide Group Scheduler" and the features table on page 220), but these features are enabled by different mechanisms. There are two basic group-scheduler architectures. One type keeps all calendar information on the network server. Local systems access the calendar on the network, make additions and changes, and then save the updated calendar back out to the server. With a true client/server architecture, such as Calendar Manager's, the server coordinates scheduling queries to

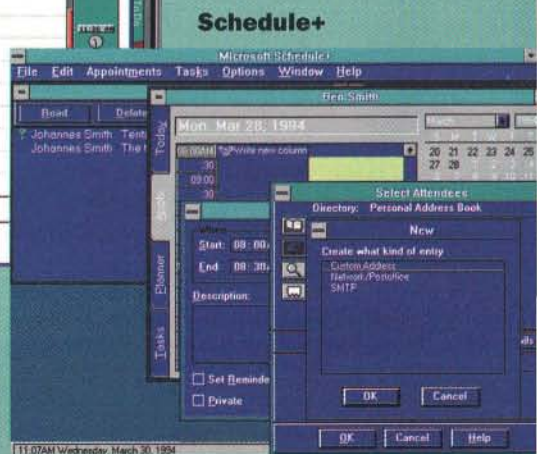
the shared database and minimizes network traffic. The second type, a distributed group scheduler, uses E-mail to pass scheduling information among individual calendars. In some cases, a group scheduler will use E-mail messaging for sending meeting requests and updating user lists while also sharing user calendars across the network.



CaLAnDar's strong suit is the ease with which it lets you view and report the combined schedules of a group. CaLAnDar works well for one person managing the combined schedules of a department or workgroup.



Of Lotus Organizer's two client platforms (Mac and Windows), the Windows client takes better advantage of the address book/organizer metaphor and drag-and-drop operation. The main window shows an open notebook with sections for a calendar, to-do list, address book, notepad, and planner.



Microsoft Schedule+ is easy to learn and use, but there are considerable differences in the user interface across platforms. The Mac and DOS client software is less functional; for instance, a to-do list is included only on the Windows client.



## Lotus Organizer

You can install Lotus Organizer either as a stand-alone personal scheduler or on a network as a group-scheduling package. In a stand-alone configuration, your schedule is maintained on your local hard drive. The group-scheduling installation puts a schedule for each registered user into a directory on a shared server. When you access your calendar across the network, you have to schlep the data across the network. Lotus Organizer is not a client/server application, but rather relies on this shared file access for communication between users.

Well, sort of. When you invite someone to a meeting, your copy of Organizer

accesses the invitee's calendar to see if he or she is available. If so, it takes the meeting information and sends it via cc:Mail to the invitee (cc:Mail is required to install Organizer as a group scheduler). It's a curious blend of an E-mail-enabled application and shared file access.

Why cc:Mail? In Organizer, cc:Mail is the transport layer that takes care of notifying users across large networks (or multiple networks). While you can't precheck the schedule for people on another file server, you can include them in your meetings and get notification from them of any meetings you've been invited to.

To facilitate the propagation of multiple messages (when scheduling a large meeting), Organizer uses an agent to handle the message traffic. Perhaps the easiest way to explain the agent is through an example.

Say you want to schedule a meeting with John (who also has a cc:Mail mailbox and schedule on your server) and Marsha (whose mailbox and schedule reside on another server in another office). When you bring up your schedule and create a new meeting, both John and Marsha appear in your directory. Marsha is flagged as a remote cc:Mail user. Your schedule shows no

conflict with John's, and it is unable to check Marsha's, so you schedule the meeting. Organizer marks your schedule and then generates messages for John and Marsha.

The Organizer agent runs on a dedicated PC or as a scheduled task on a cc:Mail router and picks up the messages. It then generates a local message to John and a remote message to Marsha. The cc:Mail router picks up Marsha's message and sends it out to Marsha's network.

John reads his mail and finds out that you've called a meeting. He launches the file enclosure, which brings up Organizer and asks him to accept or decline the meeting. When he accepts your meeting, a message shoots back through the agent and alerts you. Marsha's message is handled similarly, except that it has to go through agents and routers on both servers. Depending on how the agents and routers are set up, it could take minutes or hours for a message to make it all the way through the notification process.

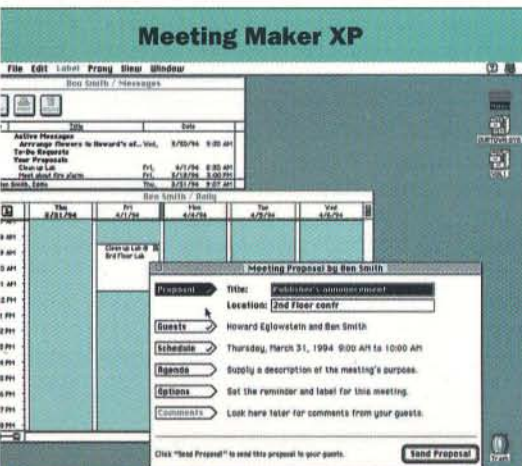
Of the two client platforms, the Windows client takes better advantage of the address book/organizer metaphor and drag-and-drop operation. The main window shows an open notebook with sections for a calendar, a to-do list, an address book, a notepad, and a planner.

If you haven't seen Organizer in any previous version, you're missing out on one of its best features—links. When planning a meeting, you can link the meeting to the address-book entries for any non-company folks who will be in attendance and further link the meeting to a notepad entry that has a meeting outline. The links feature is extremely convenient and makes Organizer worth looking at as a PIM (personal information manager).

Thanks to a connectivity solution from IntelliLink (1 Tam Blvd., Nashua, NH 03062, (603) 888-0666), Organizer can share its data with a host of popular PDAs (personal digital assistants). IntelliLink also works with Schedule+ and CaLAndar.

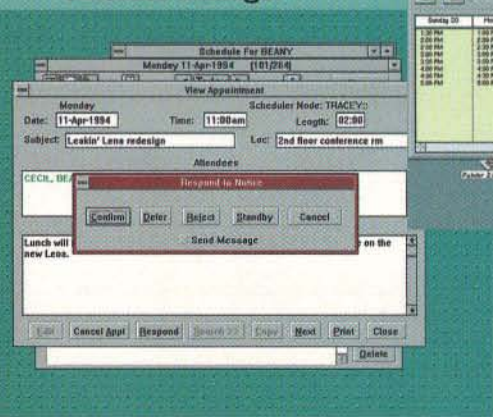
Enterprises running a mail system other than cc:Mail wouldn't want to install cc:Mail just to enable Organizer for group scheduling. But if you're already using cc:Mail, Organizer has an excellent user interface and an impressive feature set.

*continued*



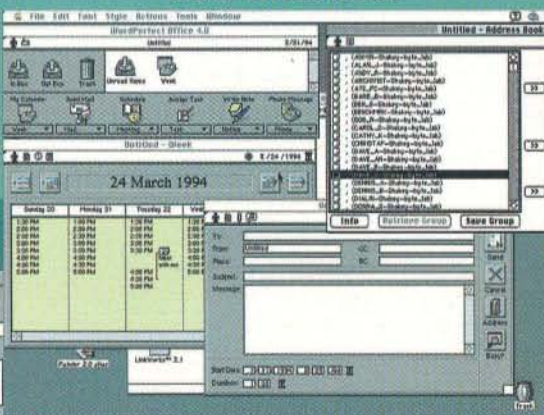
Meeting Maker XP does not have server-to-server communications or interfaces to external mail systems, as LANdard and other packages do. It's more appropriate for departments or medium-size companies than for WAN-based enterprise scheduling. But of all the schedulers we looked at, Meeting Maker is by far the easiest program to learn and use.

## Calendar Manager



Calendar Manager's client software displays your calendar by day, week, month, year, or Quick View, a format with multiple calendars side by side. Perhaps Calendar Manager's strongest attribute is its performance: Even a LAN environment won't slow it down significantly.

## WordPerfect Office



A group of WordPerfect Office servers can share directories so that changes to the user information on one server can be automatically distributed to other servers across the enterprise. Server gateways can hook into other mail formats, letting you send meeting notifications via fax, MHS, X.400, and SMTP (Internet).



# "FirstClass Outperforms Competitors Easily"

BYTE Magazine  
09/93

**M**ore than just a leading multi-platform e-mail system, FirstClass features electronic conferencing and remote access—all in the same package.

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BYTE magazine says "FirstClass blends conferencing and mail together

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(Windows screens shown. Macintosh screens similar. VT-100 interface also available.)

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## Reviews Roundup

### Microsoft Schedule+

Schedule+ requires Microsoft Mail (or Hewlett-Packard OpenMail). If you have already installed Microsoft Mail in your enterprise, it's a snap to add this package to your servers, but Schedule+ does not come bundled with the E-mail system.

Schedule+ shares a number of services with Microsoft Mail: address books and the underlying name service; authorization services (including a single sign-in interface); a message-store database; and message sending, receiving, and retrieval. These services are available through API calls to common DLLs. Programmers can develop customized applications by accessing Schedule+ calendars. Not only do these shared services make Schedule+ easier to use for those familiar with Mail, but shared functions also reduce storage requirements and ease administration chores.

Schedule+ exchanges meeting requests among its clients. When you receive a request, you can accept or decline the invitation. After accepting a meeting request, you then update your personal calendar manually; Schedule+ does not automatically log the meeting into your calendar. Microsoft claims that manual updates give users more control over their personal calendars, but it would be more flexible if you were at least given the option to enable automatic calendar updates.

Schedule+ supports a wide range of permissions. You can grant other users the right to view or even modify your calendar. You can refuse access to your calendar and only allow meeting requests to be sent to you. Or, if a coworker attempts to set up a meeting time, you can issue free/busy packets to let him or her know if you are available at the scheduled time.

You can also give other users permission to read your calendar, create new appointments, or modify existing appointments. The assistant privilege lets you establish proxies. For instance, everyone in a department might grant assistant rights to a central coordinator. The coordinator could then open up multiple users' calendars in separate windows, add and modify schedules, and issue meeting requests around the department.

Schedule+ can pass meeting requests or free/busy packets across multiple Mail post offices, providing a WAN (wide-area network) solution for enterprise scheduling. You can reach over the WAN and find out whether any corporate coworker or client is available for a scheduled time. You can also establish a direct connection between post offices so that you can di-

rectly access other users' schedules across the enterprise.

This same structure effectively supports remote users, too. You can dial in and simply receive any meeting requests issued to you, or you can log in to the network and reconcile the schedule you've been keeping on the road with any additions or updates made to your home schedule.

This architecture works well on a single platform. Windows clients can share the calendars of other Windows clients and pass free/busy packets around, and Mac clients can do the same. The problem comes when you try to mix the two environments. Schedule+ supports only the passing of simple meeting requests across platforms. You can't share calendars across platforms, so your departmental coordinator would not be able to access the cal-



### What to Look For in an Enterprise-Wide Group Scheduler

**Dial-in users.** This feature lets you dial into the group scheduler to update and receive calendar data.

**E-mail support.** If you already have E-mail in place, look for a group scheduler that supports your flavor of mail or go with a scheduler with built-in messaging. You probably don't want to install a second full-fledged mail system to enable group scheduling.

**Find free time.** Automatically finds a time when all attendees and resources are available for a meeting.

**Wide-area connections.** Allows multiple calendar databases to share scheduling information across servers. You'll need this capability to enable enterprise-wide scheduling across a WAN (wide-area network).

**Notify nonusers.** Sends mail to notify meeting attendees who are not licensed to use the scheduling application. Some schedules can even notify nonusers via fax.

**Off-line users.** Allows you to schedule appointments even when you are not attached to a network. **Synchronization** capabilities ensure that all your appointments are reconciled to a single calendar when you log back on to the network.

**Platform support.** Make sure the group scheduler operates on all the platforms used in your organization. In a large mixed environment, a consistent interface across platforms can make user training and support much easier.

**Proxy.** Grants another person access to your calendar. You need this capability if you have a central coordinator or an assistant who tracks your appointments.



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enders of both Windows and Mac users from a single workstation. In fact, you can't even pass free/busy packets across platforms, so Mac clients can't search Windows clients for open meeting times, and vice versa.

Schedule+ is easy to learn and use, but there are considerable differences in the user interface across platforms. The Mac client software appears to be several revisions behind the Windows version, and it lacks some of the functionality, as does the MS-DOS version. (The DOS client is supplied by PowerCore International.) For instance, a to-do list is included only on the Windows client.

The scheduler itself lacks some niceties. Scheduled meetings must begin and end on 15-minute intervals (i.e., 1:00, 1:15, 1:30, and so on), and the allocation bar does not inform you of the meeting scheduled unless you double-click on it. For installations already using Mail, Schedule+ is a simple upgrade and offers an enterprise-wide solution—if you can accept the cross-platform limitations.

## Microsystems Software CaLAndar

Rich with features, the CaLAndar Enterprise Scheduling system is designed for the eclectic user of electronic communications. Besides the standard tools for group scheduling, CaLAndar maintains a fairly extensive database file (Calodex) on each person that has a CaLAndar account and an automatic phone dialer. (It is not clear how to set up the dialer, however.) There is a network chat utility for communicating with another user, as well as a handy In/Out status indicator. CaLAndar can import and export to other file types and communicate with the appointment manager on the Sharp Wizard.

CaLAndar's strongest suit is the ease with which it lets you view and report the combined schedules of a group. CaLAndar works well for a person who must manage the combined schedules of a department or workgroup. A single person can (with permission) access other people's schedules, one at a time. Unfortunately, the group detail report can only be printed; it is not one of the screen displays.

Installing CaLAndar is somewhat difficult; however, the program will support a complex organization. It can communicate with other CaLAndar servers via an external E-mail system. The E-mail gateways include cc:Mail, Microsoft Mail, Vines Intelligent Messaging, Da Vinci eMail, BeyondMail, WordPerfect Office, and any MHS-based E-mail system.

*continued*

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The Macintosh and Windows user interfaces are very similar. CaLAndar has a unique time-bar display for navigating your daily schedule, and a clever link between the windows of different displays. There is even a fair amount of consistency in the MS-DOS interface, despite its heavily layered, multilevel menu approach. (Unfortunately, the MS-DOS version requires a huge amount of memory and will not load if you have a rich set of TSR programs and device drivers on your system.) Each user interface has context-sensitive help.

CaLAndar requires a PC-network server. Mac clients must mount the server through the Chooser. This makes for slow database access on the Macs.

## On Technology Meeting Maker XP

Meeting Maker XP was the easiest program to install. The server can reside on either a Mac or a PC, but Meeting Maker does not have server-to-server communications or interfaces to external mail systems, as do CaLAndar and others. This system is more appropriate for departments or medium-size companies than for WAN-based enterprise scheduling.

Meeting Maker can import and export user lists through intermediate text files. This can make installing new servers easier. The message database is proprietary. It was fast and easy to maintain, even when we used a Mac SE as the server.

The Mac server talked to PCs through an IPX network stack for the Mac, which

comes with the product. Only the server required the IPX stack, so that it could talk with the client PCs. The other Macs were already using AppleTalk, so no additional protocols were needed on the Macintosh side.

Meeting Maker lets you open a separate window (or iconized window) for any number of coworker schedules, as long as those people have given you permission to be a proxy for setting up meetings. As you attempt to include people in a meeting, you are warned of possible conflicts. You can also call a graph of the group schedule, which shows when other invited participants have scheduled activities. These tools would help a central coordinator devise departmental schedules. Unfortunately, the graph does not give you more than a day's view, so it's only good for picking a time within a day, not for determining the best day to hold the meeting.

Meeting Maker has the easiest find-free-time facility of any of the group schedulers. Click on a single button, and Meeting Maker suggests the first time and day that the invited members can get together without a conflict. Subsequent clicks generate other suggestions. The other group schedulers do this as well, but none as intuitively as Meeting Maker.

Meeting Maker retains the native look and feel of the Mac and Windows platforms. You can work off-line, so you don't have to maintain an active network connection to use your calendar.

Meeting Maker lacks the complexities

necessary for distributed group scheduling, but of all the schedulers we reviewed, Meeting Maker is by far the easiest to learn and use.

## Russell Information Sciences Calendar Manager

Of the reviewed products, Calendar Manager is the only one that strictly implements the client/server model in the manner most people would expect. The server in Calendar Manager runs as a background task on a network file server. Depending on your environment, the server could be a NetWare 3.x server or a DEC VAX running VMS and DECnet. For mixed environments, all the server options can also communicate via TCP/IP protocols. Although Meeting Maker's use of a dedicated workstation as a server would also classify it as a client/server environment, that solution ties up a workstation. Calendar Manager uses leftover processing power on your file servers to manage the scheduling database.

The wide variety of servers supported by Calendar Manager suggests an equally rich selection of clients; we tested only the Windows and Mac client software, but Calendar Manager clients also run over DOS and Teamlinks/Pathworks for VMS. Older computer installations that still have ASCII terminals attached to a minicomputer can use the terminal client software (\$2200 to \$30,000 for an unlimited license, depending on system CPU configuration). Our test server was a VAXstation running

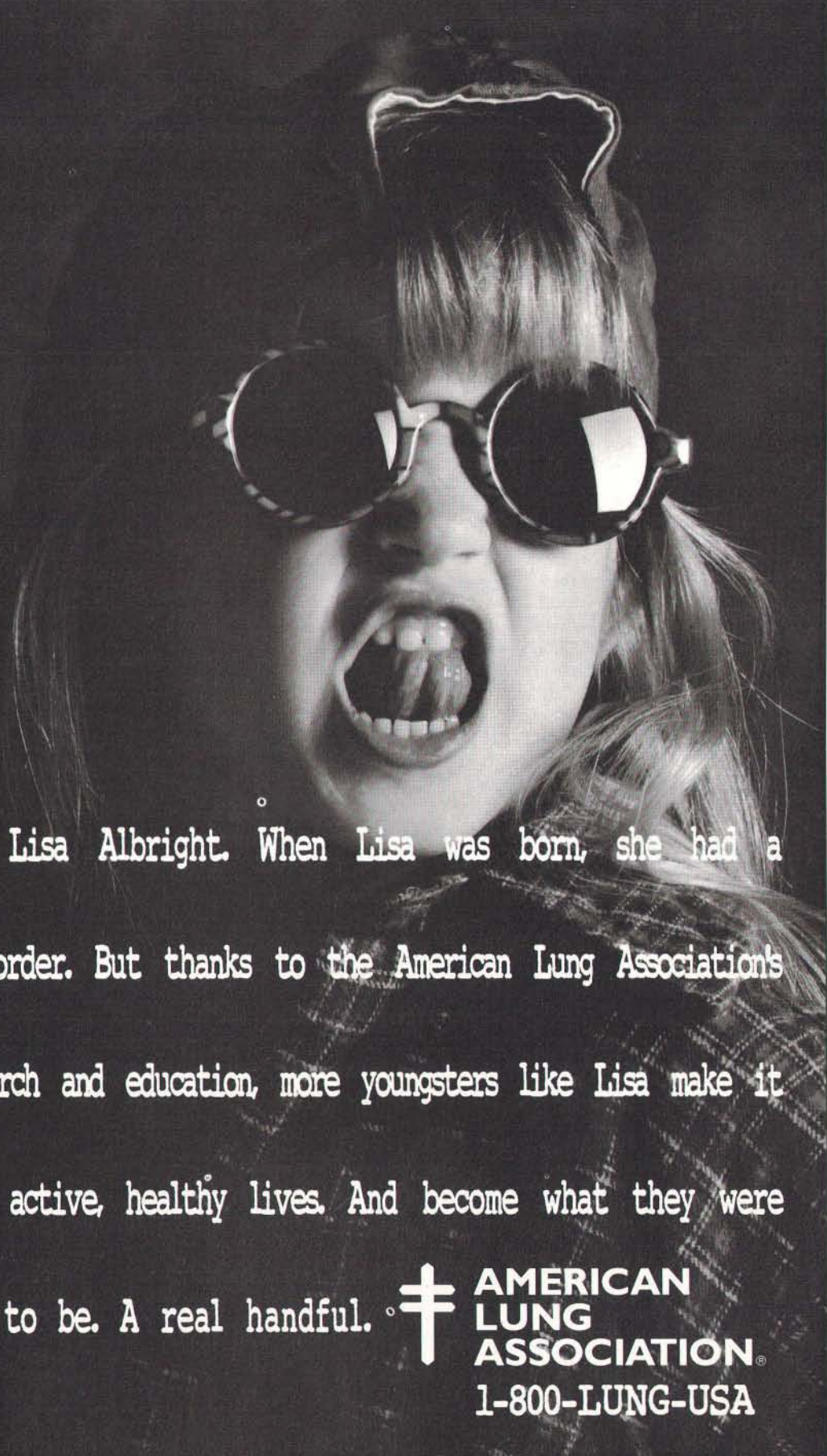
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Price per seat <sup>1</sup>						
10 seats	\$116	\$79	\$59.50 single platform; \$69.50 DOS, Win, and Mac	\$79	\$176 per client <sup>2</sup> + \$995 for first server	\$90 per client + \$295 per server
1000 seats	\$33	\$49	\$30 single platform; \$40 DOS, Win, and Mac	\$57	\$58	\$70
Architecture	Distributed database	Distributed database	Shared database	Distributed database	Shared database	Shared database
E-mail interface	cc:Mail required	Microsoft Mail or Hewlett-Packard OpenMail required	Many (none required)	None required	None required	Included (primary function)
Find free time	●	●	●	●	●	●
DOS client	In July	●	●	●	●	●
Wide-area connections	●	●	●	○	●	●
Notify nonusers	●	●	●	○	●	Mail, fax, printer
Proxy	●	●	●	●	●	●
Dial-in users	○	●	●	○	○	●
Off-line users	●	●	●	●	●	●
Synchronization	○	●	●	●	○	●
Import/export calendar database	●	●	●	●	○	●
Import/export user list	●	●	●	●	●	●
Import/export formats	ASCII, IntelliLink option for HP 95LX, HP 100LX, OmniBook 300, Casio B.O.S.S., Tandy Z-550 Zoomer, Sharp Wizard	ASCII, IntelliLink option for HP 95LX, HP 100LX, OmniBook 300, Casio B.O.S.S., Tandy Z-550 Zoomer, Sharp Wizard	ASCII, IntelliLink option for HP 95LX, HP 100LX, OmniBook 300, Casio B.O.S.S., Tandy Z-550 Zoomer, Sharp Wizard	ASCII, Casiolink, HP-100LX, HP 95LX, Newton, Sharp Wizard	ASCII	ASCII

<sup>1</sup> Price per seat for 10-user bundles and 1000-user bundles. Other volume discounts are available. Prices for large volumes are usually negotiable.

<sup>2</sup> Smallest available quantity is 20 seats.

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VMS and using DECnet to communicate with our Macintosh and PC/Windows clients.

Calendar Manager's interface is remarkably similar across the Mac and Windows clients. In a large mixed environment, a consistent interface can make user training and support much easier.

Calendar Manager's client software displays your calendar by day, week, month, year, or Quick View, a format with multiple calendars side by side. In most organizations, busy executives will want to have an assistant check or update their calendar in their absence. For example, the VP of R&D in your company might choose to give her secretary full access to her schedule but keep her secretary from seeing the detailed agenda for some of the meetings. The office manager may need to be able to check the schedule without making changes. Calendar Manager's access modes make configuring these proxy levels a breeze. When you access someone's schedule as a proxy, the window is clearly marked to avoid confusion.

Resources (e.g., overhead projectors and conference rooms) are "invited" to a meeting in approximately the same way as users. One incredibly useful addition is the wild-card support in resource names. If your company has several conference rooms on each floor, you might designate them as #CONF\_1A and #CONF\_1B on the first floor and #CONF\_2A, #CONF\_2B, and #CONF\_2C on the second floor. When you schedule a meeting, you can designate #CONF\_2B if you want that specific room, #CONF\_2\* if you'll take any room on the second floor, and #CONF\_\* if you'll take any room on either floor. Using the star convention is pretty universal across Calendar Manager's client base and is an effective way to deal with groups of similar resources.

Perhaps Calendar Manager's strongest attribute is its performance. Since you have a client/server environment, your instance of Calendar Manager will send its request rapidly to the server using a peer-to-peer protocol (IPX, DECnet, or TCP/IP). The server maintains the calendars for all users registered on that node, performs the scheduling functions on local disk storage, and reports back instantly. Even a WAN environment won't slow it down significantly; DEC uses Calendar Manager across

its WAN to coordinate meetings with folks across multiple continents. Using high-speed T1 and similar links, the Calendar Manager servers can speak with each other and come back with schedule confirmations within seconds.

## WordPerfect Office

WordPerfect Office's group-scheduling capability can easily be lost in the product's other facilities. It is, after all, primarily an E-mail system. But it does do cross-platform scheduling along with its cross-platform E-mail, and it supports Mac, Windows, and MS-DOS clients. WordPerfect Office can import the full naming conventions of the NetWare name bindery.

The WordPerfect Office server software (i.e., post office) must reside on a PC-LAN server, and so, as with CaLANdar, its database must be mounted on Macs through the AppleShare Chooser. Not only is the performance with this extra networking load slow on the Mac, it is also slow on a 50-MHz 486 running Windows with 8 MB of RAM. It requires a huge amount of disk space on the server—nearly 50 MB.

WordPerfect Office is entirely E-mail-based: Every communication within WordPerfect Office is a mail message that is sent from one user to another or to a group of users. For instance, when you want to schedule a meeting with a coworker, you send an E-mail message to the coworker, who then responds with an E-mail message back to you.

WordPerfect Office provides a form to search for available meeting times. After

filling out the form, you are presented with a chart of the scheduled times for the proposed attendees. You can also designate a proxy to maintain your schedule.

Unfortunately, the user interface is far from intuitive unless you just want to use the scheduler as a simple adjunct to WordPerfect Office E-mail. And, as with Schedule+, the schedule and event granularity is limited to 15-minute intervals.

The WordPerfect Office scheduler has an impressive collection of formats in which to view your schedules. A group of WordPerfect Office servers can share directories, so changes to the user information on one server can be automatically distributed to other servers across the enterprise. Server gateways can hook into other mail formats, letting you send meeting notifications via fax, MHS, X.400, and SMTP (Internet). It is an attractive option if you are establishing an enterprise-wide E-mail solution and consider group scheduling a secondary concern. But dedicated group schedulers are less complex to set up and use.

## A Schedule to Keep

Microsoft Schedule+, WordPerfect Office, and Lotus Organizer each run on the vendor's own established E-mail system. If you already have the underlying E-mail transport installed across the enterprise, the associated schedulers are an appropriate choice. Lotus Organizer has one of the best interfaces around, and Schedule+ includes strong support for WAN connections and dial-in users. Both products lack cross-platform consistency.

For large enterprises with WAN connections, Calendar Manager delivers the most effective solution. Its client/server architecture provides robust performance and seamless cross-platform support over LANs and WANs.

For smaller workgroups with Windows and Mac clients, Meeting Maker XP is by far the easiest package to install, learn, and use. It's an excellent choice for any workgroup that does not include WANs. ■

*Ben Smith and Howard Eglowstein are testing editors for the BYTE Lab. You can contact Ben on the Internet at ben@bytepb.byte.com or on BIX as "bensmith." You can reach Howard on the Internet or BIX at heglowstein@bix.com.*

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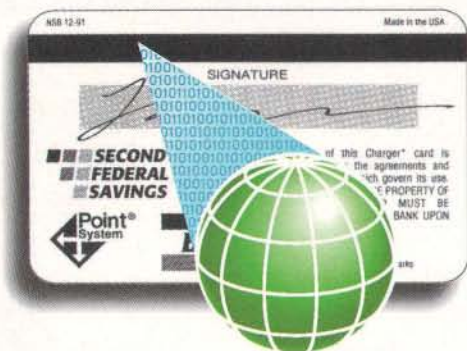
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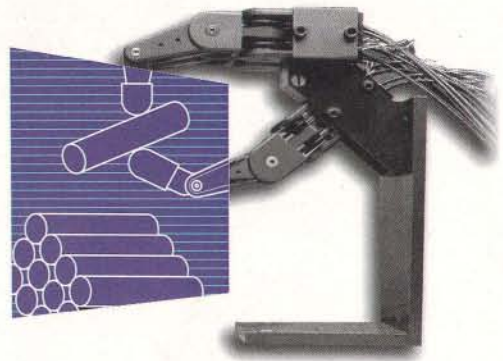


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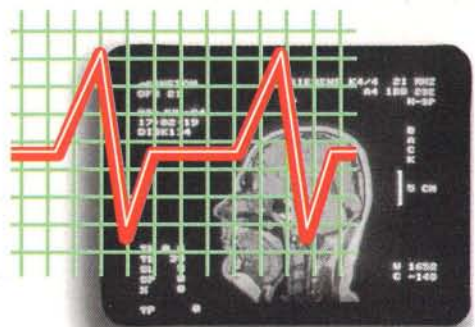
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# Plug-and-Go File Server

**A dedicated NFS server with appliance-like ease of use, the FAServer provides affordable performance and data reliability**

**BRUCE DAWSON**

**T** rue to its name, Network Appliance Corp. (NAC) makes a file server that you basically just plug in and use. Attach a few cables, answer a few installation prompts, and the FAServer 400 is up and running, providing up to 27.3 GB of fast, reliable Level 4 RAID storage.

The FAServer is a dedicated file server for LANs with clients supporting NFS (Network File System) protocol—typically Unix sites running TCP/IP as an Ethernet protocol. However, the FAServer isn't just for Unix environments; many multiprotocol networks support TCP/IP, often with NFS support for clients other than Unix machines.

As an NFS server appliance, NAC's FAServer can specialize in file serving and provide better performance, reliability, and economy than the general-purpose Unix workstations typically used as NFS servers. With its proprietary file system, tuned to function with both the NFS protocol and RAID 4, the FAServer provides both exceptional performance and such niceties as automatic on-disk incremental backups, hot swapping, and incremental capacity growth. Using a dedicated file server also simplifies administrative tasks, such as backups and account administration, and relieves workstations of the burden of serving files.

Starting at \$16,995 for a unit with two mirrored 1-GB hard drives and 16 MB of RAM, the FAServer 400 is actually part of a small product line. At the upper end is the rack-mounted FAServer 1400, which supports redundant power supplies and goes for \$20,995 with two 1-GB drives.

## What's NFS?

NFS is a network-file-server protocol developed by Sun Microsystems. It layers on top of IP, which runs over a wide variety of media (most typically Ethernet, but serial lines, FDDI [Fiber Distributed Data Interface], and wireless LANs are not uncommon).

NFS is a *stateless* file-sharing protocol, which means that the file server can reboot and its clients won't notice, except

for the delay during the reboot. Hence, it is an ideal protocol to run over large networks that have long latency delays or that cover a wide geographical area, such as the Internet.

While NFS is a de facto standard in the Unix world and many Unix systems support it, NFS has not caught on in the PC marketplace. One reason for this is that it requires additional protocols to manage the technical details of such server application necessities as file and record locking and file system mounting and unmounting. These capabilities were designed to run as processes separate from NFS, and that's something DOS doesn't handle as gracefully as Unix does.

However, a number of companies have warmed to the capabilities of Unix, especially for large applications, and have invested in Unix systems. Companies that want to share data among all their computers—which often include PCs, Macintoshes, and Unix and other systems—can choose from a good selection of TCP/IP software that often includes NFS support as an option.

## Not Unix

If you have the idea that the FAServer runs Unix and that you can therefore do things like add additional commands, get ready for a surprise. It's not Unix, or even close to it. The FASware operating system is an embedded system with precious few Unix-like commands—only the bare necessities for administering the system. If it used Unix or a Unix derivative, the FAServer wouldn't be able to provide the performance that it does because of overhead.

Inside the FAServer 400's big black case is room for up to seven 1- or 2-GB SCSI-2 hard drives. Because of NAC's WAFL file system, you can add drives to the RAID-4 array one at a time.



Not only does the operating system lack many Unix commands (those it does have are similar to their Unix counterparts), the file system is radically different. NAC named it Write Anywhere File Layout (WAFL for short), because any part of the file system, including the file management information, can be written anywhere on a disk. Partly as a result, the FAServer gets around the performance bottleneck that RAID-4 designs typically create because they must update a dedicated parity drive with every write operation.

RAID offers the advantages of data protection through redundancy (the parity drive), a large data space through ganged drives, and high performance through parallel access to multiple drives (known as *striping*). The technology used to implement the various RAID levels becomes more sophisticated as the level number increases.

RAID 5 is currently the most sophisticated because it stores parity information on all the drives, making the parity updates less of a bottleneck. It also has the disadvantage of requiring that you add



## FAServer WAFL File System

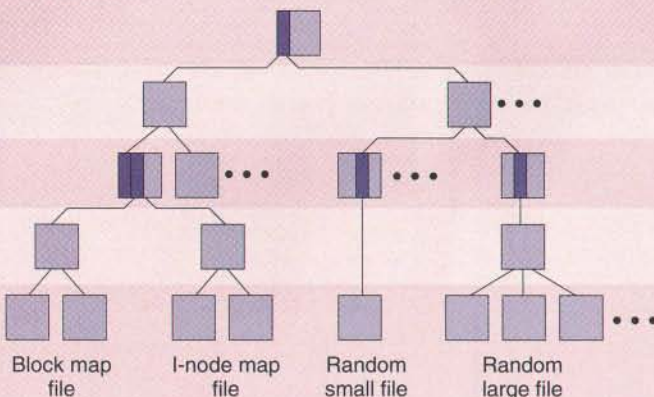
Root i-node

I-node file  
indirect blocks

I-node file  
data blocks

Regular file  
indirect blocks

Regular file  
data blocks



The FAServer makes the most of its RAID-4 drive system by collecting and organizing write operations for periodic disk updates. NAC's WAFL adds to this efficiency; all updated data blocks, as well as changes to directory and allocation information, are written in roughly the same stripe across the drive array. Files are located using arrays of pointers called *i-nodes*. The *root i-node*, the only block with a fixed location, describes the file system and points to the *i-node* file, which in turn points to file blocks, including the *block map* file that tracks disk allocation and the *i-node map* file that tracks free *i-nodes*. One or more layers of indirect pointers are used for larger files (as shown). A snapshot is simply a copy of the root *i-node* taken at a particular time. Because old data and directory information aren't overwritten immediately, a snapshot can recover old versions of files.

disks in increments of whole arrays (instead of single disks).

NAC chose to use RAID 4, which has most of the features of RAID 5 but lets you augment the array incrementally with single disks. (The FAServer operating system supports this.) In addition, NAC's WAFL file system overcomes the performance disadvantage of a dedicated parity drive.

With its WAFL system, the FAServer doesn't overwrite an existing file to update it; it writes the update to a new area and then changes internal pointers to the file. Such updates include any directory and block allocation data that changes, too. The FAServer holds incoming write data and NFS requests in its battery-backed 2-MB cache (upgradable to 4 MB) so that it can organize all new writes and updates into an efficient, all-in-one write operation that occurs in a narrow band across all drives, including parity updates.

WAFL writing episodes occur every 10 seconds or so and are managed so that a dirty server shutdown, such as from loss of power, won't corrupt any data—even that in the battery-backed cache RAM.

### Backup Reliability

The WAFL file system has reliability benefits as well. Because old data isn't overwritten immediately, it still exists on the drives. And just as the FAServer maintains the file data, it also maintains the pointers to that data, so all the data on the

drive as it existed at a particular time is recoverable. NAC calls this concept *snapshots*.

Essentially, a snapshot is a read-only version of the entire file system at a particular point in time. The FAServer maintains up to eight snapshots of the file system that users can access to recover files as long as two weeks after deletion.

A frequent problem with making backups of a running system is that some data will change while a backup is under way. This problem isn't specific to file servers, but is common to all multiprocessing systems. Usually, you should first bring such a system to stand-alone mode so that there is no activity other than the backup.

Because of the FAServer's WAFL file system and snapshots, however, you don't have to bring the server down for backups. When it comes time to back up the server, all you have to do is back up the snapshot files, and file system consistency will be preserved. This one feature could easily justify the procurement of a FAServer to organizations that want highly available systems.

Of course, this snapshot method is a bit more complex than the traditional file-writing method, so NAC has provided several commands to help in snapshot management. The Administration Guide has also done a good job describing the basic principles behind the snapshot method. The snapshot management commands allow the administrator to reserve space for

snapshots, create and delete them, rename them, schedule them, and list them. Snapshots are client accessible (as read-only subdirectories of the mount-point directory), and the administrator can choose to disable snapshots entirely or schedule them as often or as seldom as desired.

### Room to Grow

The FAServer 400 has a 50-MHz 486 CPU, an Ethernet board (with thick and twisted-pair Ethernet connections), a small VGA monitor and graphics card, and a 3½-inch floppy drive for loading software. I tested the \$16,995 base unit with 16 MB of RAM (expandable to 128 MB) and two 1.08-GB Fujitsu hard drives. Since RAID-4 uses one disk for parity, that leaves 1.08 GB of actual storage.

It's a rather large, wide black tower on casters, with room for up to seven hard drives. An additional chassis (\$2995) can hold seven more. Drive capacity can be either 1.08 or 2.1 GB; maximum capacity is 27.3 GB, which appears as a single volume. The unit has four fans, which in older units can be quite noisy. The FAServer I tested had older fans and produced a sound reminiscent of a space heater. I moved it to the computer room because of all the noise.

For an appliance, the FAServer has a surprising number of expansion options. In its EISA expansion slots it can take up to four network adapters, including one or two FDDI adapters and up to two SCSI-2 controllers.

After I completed the review of the 400, NAC started replacing this model with its new 450 (for the same price). The 450 has a slightly larger case that can hold 14 drives instead of seven. All else, including the electronics and software, remains the same as in the 400.

### Setup

Setting up the FAServer was a snap. All I had to do was let it warm up (it arrived when the outside temperature was 10°F), plug it in, and cable it up. The only glitch was a VGA board that must have worked loose in shipping. Once I discovered how to get into the box and reseal the board, the system came up perfectly.

During the installation process, I had to type in four essential pieces of information: the node name, its IP address and netmask, and the local time zone. I also entered an administration host name; if this is not specified, any node on the network will have root access.

After I provided this information, the



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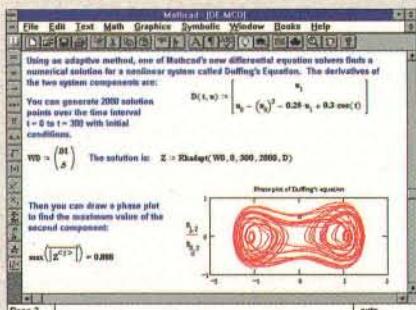
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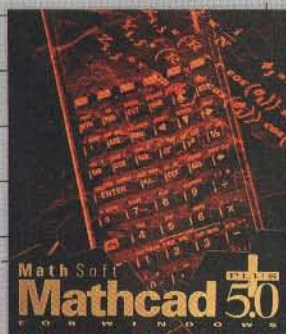
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## Reviews Plug-and-Go File Server

FAServer immediately came up on the network. I then went to the administration host and edited the FAServer's `/etc/hosts` file to add the other systems on the network. Note that the FAServer software doesn't yet support any of the network name protocols (NIS or BIND), so it relies on several files in its `/etc` directory for network information.

After adding some of the systems on the network to the `/etc/hosts` and `/etc/exports` files and mounting the FAServer's file system on the clients, I started copying files to and from the FAServer. It was surprising just how quickly the FAServer responded to some systems; it provides better response than a number of general-purpose computers with faster CPUs. And it was an even bigger surprise to see how slowly the FAServer appeared to respond to some slower systems that I tested.

### Testing

Used with a DECstation 3100 running Ultrix 4.1, the FAServer ran like a breeze. Copying a 4,058,924-byte file from the DECstation 3100 to the FAServer took 1 minute, 19 seconds, and copying the file in the other direction took 21 seconds. It took 27 seconds to create a 10-MB file on the FAServer from the DECstation 3100 (no local disk I/O); this is in contrast to the 24 seconds it took to create the file on a local disk.

The above numbers were gathered on a relatively quiet network (i.e., there was no network file activity). I had also flushed Ultrix's I/O caches by doing a lot of other I/O before starting the tests.

It was not unusual to see "NFS server xxx not responding, still trying" messages while copying a file from the DECstation 3100 to the FAServer. I never saw the messages when copying in the other direction. Technical support at NAC explained that the FAServer can turn packets around a lot faster than some clients can see them, which results in time-outs.

A *time-out* is the amount of time that elapses before the client tells the server that it missed a packet. If the time-out has been set to the default of 30 seconds, then the client effectively waits 30 seconds before notifying the server that a packet is

missing. Reducing the time-out to the 1-second minimum means that the client waits only 1 second before noticing the missing packet.

When I tested the FAServer with an HP 9000 Series 7000 as client, performance was even faster than with the DECstation. It took only 15.31 seconds to create a 10-MB file on the FAServer from the HP. When performing the same tests on a no-name 33-MHz 386 running Interactive Unix 3.2.2, I saw substantially slower numbers. It took more than 2 hours to copy a 891,110-byte file from the Interactive Unix system to the FAServer, and I aborted the attempt to create a 10-MB file on the FAServer from the Interactive Unix system after about 2 hours.

NAC explained that this slow performance was due to the time-outs and packet resends: The FAServer sent packets back a lot faster than the clients could process them. NFS typically uses the UDP (User Data Packet) data-layer protocol to perform data transfers; since UDP has minimal overhead, it is faster than other protocols. However, UDP does little error checking, leaving reliability checking to the application—in this case, the NFS server and clients. Although there are TCP implementations of NFS to ensure a reliable link at the cost of added overhead, they are not in wide use, and NAC has not yet implemented them in the FAServer.

I experienced similar problems with a Dell 320SLi running DOS 6.0 with Microsoft Windows 3.1, FTP Software's PC/TCP with Interdrive 2.2, and Xircom's

Ethernet CreditCard with version 2 of its software. However, the FTP Interdrive (NFS) software installed on that system was much more configurable than the Interactive Unix software, and I was able to reduce the time-outs. Although I then saw better throughput

on the Dell, it still did not match the throughput seen with the faster clients.

NAC plans to replace the version 1.2 software I reviewed with version 2.0 in late July. The new version will support DNS (Domain Name Service), a TCP/IP network name protocol.

### Administering the FAServer

You can administer the FAServer directly through its console terminal, remotely

through a telnet session (only one is permitted), or through SNMP (MIB-II [Management Information Base] is supported). You don't have most of the commands that would be available on typical Unix systems, such as editors, directory listers, and the like. Nor do you have direct access to the file system itself. In fact, to add additional clients, you have to edit the `/etc/hosts` and `/etc/exports` files on the FAServer from an NFS client (typically the administration client system specified at installation).

The FAServer telnet session and console are linked together—a useful security feature. When the console password is typed on the FAServer console and a telnet session is active to the FAServer, commands and output on either appear on the other. Unfortunately, there are no provisions for hard-copy output; the FAServer has no serial or parallel ports.

The FAServer also supports the SNMP MIB-II agent protocol and provides commands to query and update the MIB. These are not configured in by default, and if desired, you must hand-edit them into the start-up file at installation time. Of course, your site must have the appropriate network management software to take advantage of this feature.

### Fast and Easy

The FAServer gives excellent performance with fast clients, copying megabytes of files over an Ethernet connection in just a few seconds. However, its quick response time caused problems with slower clients, in some cases slowing file transfers to a snail's pace. If you have slower NFS clients on your network, I'd recommend waiting for a release of FAServer software that can slow its response to match that of the client.

Because of NAC's WAFL file system and RAID-4 optimizations, the FAServer's performance will hold steady regardless of the number of disks on the system. As important as performance to most people, however, will be the FAServer's ease of installation, administration, and expansion, together with the convenience and data reliability of its snapshot file system. A starting price of \$16,995 doesn't hurt, either. ■

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### About the Product

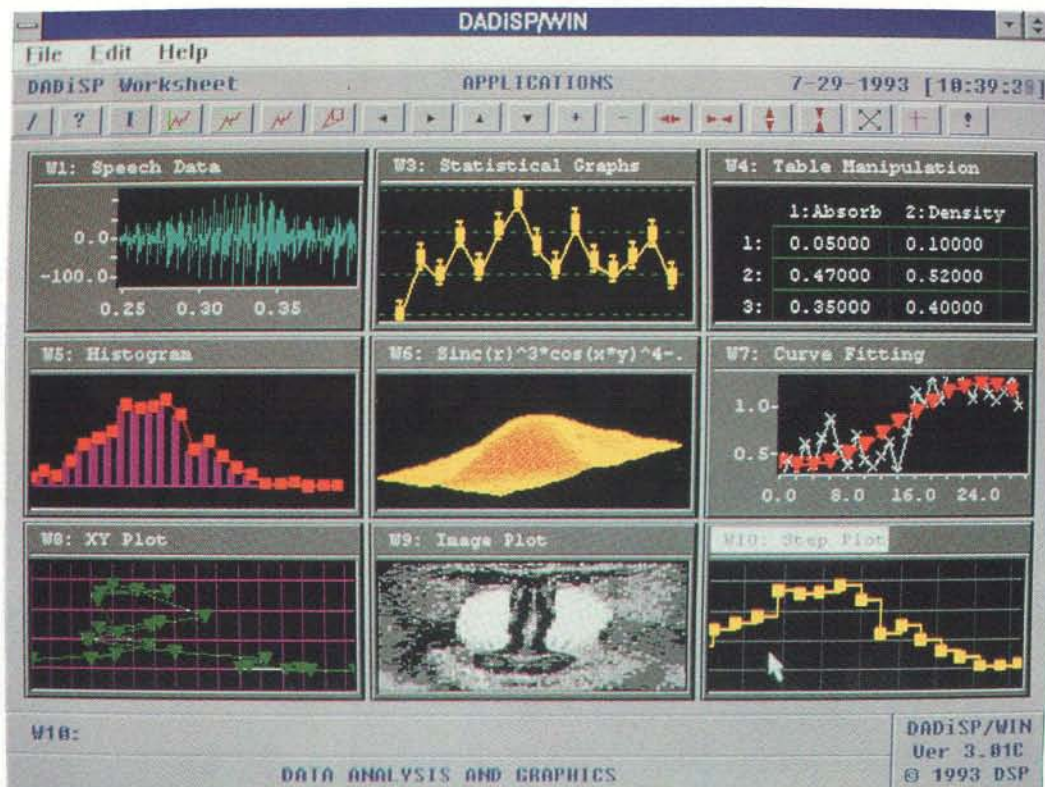
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# Dial-Up Networking

**Telebit's NetBlazer PN1 remote router provides affordable WAN connections over both dial-up and leased lines**

**BRUCE DAWSON**

**W**hen distance rules out direct connection, remote routers let you extend your LAN to distant sites over phone lines. You can, for example, tie smaller LANs at field offices into a bigger corporate LAN, creating a WAN (wide-area network). Telebit's NetBlazer line provides on-demand remote routing as well as remote-node and modem-sharing functions over both dial-up phone lines and leased lines.

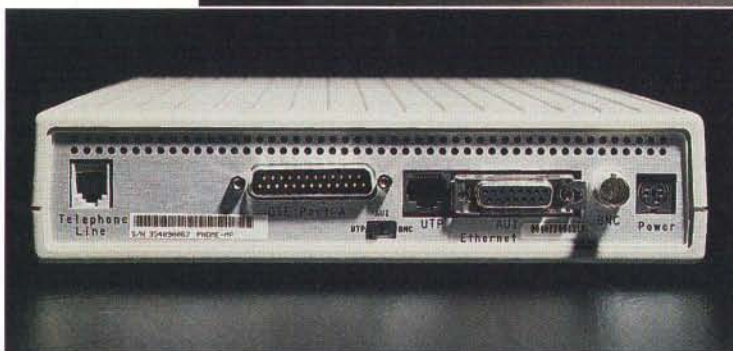
The NetBlazer PN1 I review here is an integrated V.32bis modem and Ethernet router with a serial port for connecting a second modem. Introduced earlier this year, Telebit's PN models are the low end of the NetBlazer line. Like other NetBlazers, the \$2699 PN1 understands IP (Unix), IPX (Novell), and EtherTalk (Apple) network protocols.

With a NetBlazer attached to your Ethernet LAN, remote users can dial in to the LAN, and your LAN can dial out to other router-equipped LANs or to on-line services. Two multiprotocol networks equipped with NetBlazers can act as one LAN, except for the slower transmission over phone lines and the delays of forming connections on demand. NetBlazers work with dedicated leased lines, too, both synchronous and asynchronous.

There are several PN models. While the PN1 has a built-in 14.4-Kbps modem and single serial port, the modemless PN2 (\$2299) has two serial ports (configured as DB-25 DTE [data terminal equipment] ports, following the RS-423/RS-232 standard). The PN4 (\$2999) has four serial ports for remote communication. The PN2, PN1, and PN4 Hub models (\$2999 to \$3699) each have WAN connections corresponding to the non-Hub models, but they include a built-in eight-port 10Base-T hub instead of a single Ethernet connection. You can cascade Hub models with hubs from other manufacturers.

All PN models fit in the same stackable case, with a footprint slightly larger than a legal pad. If you need more than four

The NetBlazer PN1's front panel provides activity lights for both Ethernet traffic and modem traffic. A 3½-inch floppy drive provides for initial booting and is one of several means of configuration. The NetBlazer can also boot off an IP network.



The NetBlazer PN1 provides all three types of Ethernet connection (AUI for thick coaxial cable, BNC for thin coaxial cable, and RJ-45 for twisted-pair cable), a phone connection for its internal V.32bis modem, and a 25-pin serial port for attaching a second modem.

WAN connections at a site, the larger NetBlazer ST and NetBlazer 40 routers provide up to 18 and 26 serial ports, respectively, and up to three LAN connections.

## Serial Connections

Although they support leased lines, NetBlazers specialize in dial-up connections. The PN1's built-in modem is a 14.4-Kbps V.32bis unit with a potential throughput of up to 52.2 Kbps with V.42bis compression. If the single 14.4-Kbps modem doesn't offer sufficient throughput, you can connect a second modem to the NetBlazer PN1 and gain a higher aggregate throughput. The PN1 will automatically load-balance IP traffic between the two lines. (AppleTalk and IPX are restricted to single-line connections.)

Using faster Telebit modems on the PN1's serial port, you can see unidirectional throughput as high as 115 Kbps on asynchronous lines and 128 Kbps on synchronous lines. NetBlazer serial ports can support new 28.8-Kbps V.34 modems.

The NetBlazer PN1 has three types of Ethernet media connection (10Base-T, thinnet, and thicknet), an RJ-11 phone jack, an Ethernet media selection switch, a DB-

25 DTE serial port, and a power-adaptor jack. The front panel provides comforting sets of lights—one set for Ethernet traffic and another for modem traffic. The front panel also has a 3½-inch floppy drive that provides for initial booting and configuration. Once configured, NetBlazers can boot off the network (with IP only).

## Setting Up the NetBlazer

I was particularly interested in the NetBlazer's dynamic or on-demand routing capabilities. The router dials up a remote network only when someone runs an application that attempts to access resources on that network. The NetBlazer breaks the connection when activity through the routing connection ceases, saving phone charges. (You configure the time-out.)

I also tested the NetBlazer's remote-node dial-in and modem-pooling dial-out capabilities. A remote node is a single PC, equipped with a modem, that can dial in to a NetBlazer and become a node on a network. Pooling allows network users to share one or more high-speed modems to dial out to on-line or BBS services. IPX requires the Telebit's optional ACS software to pool.

*continued*



I installed a NetBlazer PN1 at the BYTE offices in Peterborough, New Hampshire, and configured it for all three of the network protocols that it supports: IP, IPX, and AppleTalk. I installed an identical NetBlazer on my home LAN, which is solely an IP network. I configured both as PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) routers. Once connected, the two Class-C IP networks acted as one; I became an interactive user on BYTE's network, sharing files, printing files, and sending mail.

Configuring the NetBlazer was rather easy—after I read the manual. Telebit provides for several methods of configuring the NetBlazer:

- a Microsoft Windows interface that configures the NetBlazer either through its serial port or over an IPX connection
- a built-in, user-extensible command-line interface accessed either through the serial port or via telnet once the modem has been configured; you log in to the NetBlazer to use it
- an MS-DOS file loaded from its floppy drive
- via SNMP, either locally or remotely

I used all methods except the SNMP interface and was most pleased with the Windows interface for initial configuration. The command-line interface was useful for fine-tuning and debugging, but the Windows interface appeared to support all the options that the command-line interface provided and supplied an extensive help facility, too.

The floppy drive configuration method uses a DOS floppy disk (but does not contain a DOS boot block, so the NetBlazer doesn't run DOS or DOS programs). The configuration information is in ASCII text files, so you can edit the files on a DOS-based PC and the NetBlazer will then read them. Sites with a large number of NetBlazers may find this method useful for issuing sitewide configuration changes.

With IP and AppleTalk you can enable callback security. You can also employ a cryptographic method of authenticating identity if both ends are NetBlazers. With IPX, you only need a NetBlazer at one end to use the cryptographic method if the other end is a remote PPP client.

Although one of the NetBlazer's nice IP features is that it can support multiple remote networks as the same IP subnet, the two test networks already had different IP addresses. Therefore, in con-

figuring the two NetBlazers as routers at each end of the dial-up connection, I had to inform the target systems at both sites that the NetBlazers were serving as gateways between the two networks. (IP hosts have to broadcast routing information if they want to be known further than the local network.)

I repeated the same sequence on the NetBlazer at the BYTE offices using numbers appropriate for the network there, and we were theoretically connected. After fixing a configuration problem caused by the phone company's changing the dialing instructions for my home phones, and replacing a frayed Ethernet cable at BYTE, the connection was up and running.

### Theory Is Practice

The gap between theory and practice was small when, using the `rlogin` command, I tried remotely logging in to a workstation at BYTE from one of my workstations at home. You can imagine my surprise when it worked. It took just under 30 seconds for my NetBlazer to determine that the `rlogin` packet had to be routed, dial the remote NetBlazer at BYTE, establish the connection, exchange routing information with the other NetBlazer, and route the packets to a workstation at BYTE. The seamless and turnkey nature of the whole operation was impressive.

I roamed the network a bit at BYTE, NFS-mounted (Network File System) some BYTE disks on my system at home, and then logged out. Five minutes later, I tried getting a directory listing of one of the remote disks I had mounted. After another 30-second pause to connect, the directory listing appeared on my monitor. Subsequent disk accesses were faster as the connection was maintained.

Once the connection was made, it took 30 seconds to copy a 38,000-byte text file from a remotely mounted NFS disk to a local disk. A file containing all 0s took only 12 seconds due to the built-in modem's V.42bis compression.

That the NetBlazer automatically drops the phone line after it's been idle for a configurable period can save oodles of money in long-distance phone charges with infrequently used systems. As good as this sounds, however, the protocols used by programs like `rlogin` and `ping` are constantly sending packets to query the state of the other side. Using these applications prevents the NetBlazer from perceiving the line as idle; therefore, it won't drop the line until you stop these applications. (Under IPX, the NetBlazer software can

spoof SAP packets so they won't keep a connection open unnecessarily.)

### Remote Access

When someone dials in to the NetBlazer, it will, by default, prompt for a user name and password. When you first power up the NetBlazer, the only user is `root`, with no password. It is then up to you to assign a password to the `root` account to prevent random people from using that account to reconfigure the modem. Note that you can create other accounts that permit modem configuration.

With any NOS (network operating system), many users are possible, and a NetBlazer must know who they all are through its user database. The NetBlazer's firmware lets you load the user database from its command line, a floppy disk, a network host, or the DNS (Domain Name Service).

The NetBlazer allows you to create user records for each potential user of the NetBlazer. Each record specifies the user's log-in name, a password or cryptkey, the user's permissions (i.e., command restrictions), and a command to execute upon log-in. You can also configure the NetBlazer to read a remote Unix system's `/etc/passwd` file so that a particular system's users can log in to the NetBlazer. Note that users explicitly created on the NetBlazer will have parameters that override any parameters read from the network.

The NetBlazer's user database file is similar in format to Unix's user database, `passwd`, sharing the same filenames and internal line format. However, the NetBlazer ignores several fields (e.g., the user and group number fields) and attaches special meaning to the comment (fifth) field of the `passwd` file.

To test the NetBlazer's dial-in capabilities, I dialed in to it with a dumb terminal and remotely logged in to workstations at that site using the `rlogin` command. Prior to doing this, I had to log in to the NetBlazer as user `root`, create a user account for myself, and enable the account for telnet access. Then, once logged onto the NetBlazer under my own account, I could issue an `rlogin` or `telnet` command to any of the systems on the Ethernet LAN.

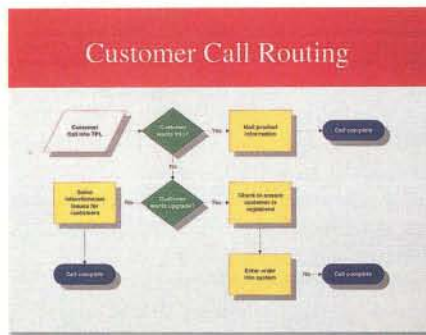
The NetBlazer presents itself to interactive users as a Unix system with a log-in and password prompt, but it has only a limited set of Unix-like commands to choose from. I wasn't able to issue an `rlogin` command to any of the workstations at the remote site, because I had dialed in to the modem line that the NetBlazer would have used to dial out to the



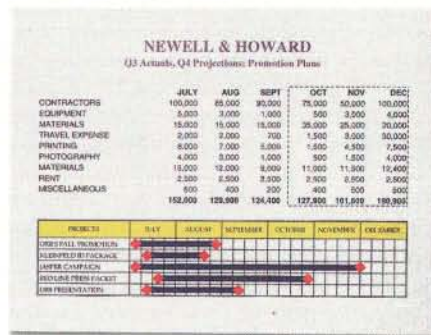
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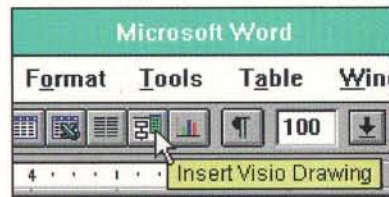
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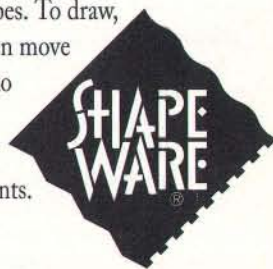
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remote site. However, if the two NetBlazers had been equipped with second modems, it should have worked.

## Modem Sharing

A network user who wishes to dial out through a modem connected to the NetBlazer must log in to the NetBlazer and issue a `session dial` command. The NetBlazer first ensures that the user has dial-out permissions and, if so, dials out. An administrator can configure the NetBlazer so that any user-provided phone number can be dialed or so that certain users can dial only certain sites.

It isn't easy to make the NetBlazer totally transparent to dial-out users. However, you can create a NetBlazer user account that dials another modem (e.g., create a NetBlazer user called `compuserve`) and set the user's profile to automatically issue the `dial` and `logout` commands so that the log-out command is executed after the dial completes and logs the user off the NetBlazer. Network users can then telnet to the NetBlazer and log in to the `compuserve` account.

The NetBlazer has commands you can use to maintain the phone number and dial-out databases. Users with configuration permissions can update these databases, along with other configuration parameters. (The configuration privilege is the most powerful NetBlazer privilege.)

To see how well the NetBlazer performed as an Ethernet modem pool, I logged in to my account on the NetBlazer from a workstation using telnet and issued a `dial` command to a local access point for an on-line service. The NetBlazer promptly dialed the specified number and connected me.

I subsequently tried dialing the other NetBlazer at the remote site, hoping that I wouldn't run interference with Ethernet traffic, and the whole process went very smoothly. The remote NetBlazer presented me with a log-in prompt, and I was able to log in as a normal user. When I tried to dial yet another modem, knowing that I was on the remote NetBlazer's only modem, I got an appropriate error message.

## Making AppleTalk

After getting the IP network going, I tried the NetBlazer's AppleTalk routing. The PN1 can also serve as an ARA (AppleTalk Remote Access) router and an ADSP-capable modem. One serial port can work both as an AppleTalk router and an ARA remote-node server. The NetBlazer uses AppleTalk Phase 2 packets. ARA requires

only that your Mac have Apple's System 7 operating system.

Configuring the NetBlazer for AppleTalk was relatively straightforward. I had to know the zone names in use at each site. My site was easy—I just looked at the Chooser—but I had to call someone at BYTE to determine that site's zone names.

After providing the necessary routing information on both NetBlazers (home and BYTE), I assumed that I was now ready to run an application on the Mac at home and print on a LaserWriter at BYTE. However, that wasn't the case. After a lot of fussing, I finally called Telebit for help.

Telebit indicated that after setting up AppleTalk routing, I should reboot the NetBlazer. This wasn't documented anywhere that I could find, but it worked. After rebooting both NetBlazers, I could use the applications on the Mac at home and print on printers at the BYTE offices, share files with other Macs at BYTE, and even access the Novell file servers, Shiva Net-Modems, and other AppleTalk resources at the BYTE office.

## NetWare PPP

The NetBlazer supports IPX as a dial-in modem accessible by PCs using the included PPPShell program, as an IPX router, and as an IPX modem server. (The latter requires the ACS option, which I did not test.)

Because I was most interested in telecommuting and I didn't have Novell servers on my home network (much less a full Novell network), I only verified the NetBlazer's abilities as a dial-in modem for PCs using PPPShell.

But Telebit's IPX instructions are straightforward, and the NetBlazer has sufficient debugging primitives to help you out of any holes you may configure yourself into.

In setting up the NetBlazer for remote IPX access, the two sides must agree on their configurations. The network side has a NetBlazer and a user log-in set up for each PC workstation that can dial in. The PN1 will support numerous workstations, but only one (or two with an external modem) can use the NetBlazer PN1 at a time.

You configure the dynamic interface for the PC workstation just as you would for IP or AppleTalk networks. The only difference is that the workstation's name, the NetBlazer's interface name, and the NetBlazer's user log-in record must all

match. Also, because Telebit's remote shell is PPP-based, the dynamic interface must use PPP (instead of SL/IP or ARA).

You then create a user log-in for the workstation, using the provided floppy disk-based installation software. Again, the user name, workstation name, and interface name must all match the information the NetBlazer has. Once I got the configuration out of the way, I was pleased with how easy it was to use. You just run a batch file command from the remote PC, wait about 35 seconds, and then run `login`, and you're on the network.

## Fairly Rosy

I found no obvious bugs in the NetBlazer hardware or software. Any failures could be attributed to network and configuration problems, not the NetBlazer—it was far more reliable than the networks I ran it on. As with any product this complex, I did run into setup problems. But the Telebit technical people were very helpful in resolving such problems and answering questions. The people I talked with exhibited a good grasp of the networking technologies and protocols involved.

The NetBlazer has all the features I'd want in a remote router, except one: something to make administration a bit easier and more customizable from a remote site. An `rshd` (remote shell daemon) would

permit command execution from a remote system to do things like query the state of one or more interfaces or list the users. With a product as sophisticated as this, it's likely some customers would develop their own management scripts, and

`rsh` is a logical interface for that.

The NetBlazer PN1 is a superb networking product offering a variety of features from multiprotocol routing to modem pooling, with a strong management command set. Once it's configured, its operation is reliable and nearly seamless. If you need to link IP, IPX, and/or AppleTalk networks over distance, and several fast modems are enough to handle the traffic, then this could easily be a must-have product. ■

## About the Product

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(508) 441-2181  
fax: (508) 441-9060  
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# Forecasting the Future

You no longer need to be a statistician to generate sophisticated business forecasts

GEORGE STEWART

Software-based business forecasting is not new, but it has been limited to a select group of professionals who understand the methodologies and terminologies of forecasting. Now a new class of forecasting software incorporates the decision strategies used by statisticians while guiding nontechnical businesspeople through a forecasting session much as a statistical consultant would.

The four programs featured in this review—Forecast Pro for Windows, Smart-Forecast, Solo Statistical Software, and Autocast II—generate forecasts based on real-world data known as *time series*. A time series is a set of observations taken at regular intervals; for example, a retail-store chain's weekly sales, a family's monthly electricity usage, or the number of individuals applying for unemployment benefits each quarter. Using such data, the forecasting programs predict what will happen in the near future: expected sales, next month's electricity usage, or future unemployment figures.

In this review, I evaluate products that focus primarily on time-series forecasting and on making forecasting available to the lay person. I have not included large, general-purpose statistical software.

## The Nuts and Bolts

The first step in the statistical forecasting process involves collecting the time-series data. Depending on the circumstances, you may need as few as five or six annual observations or as many as several thousand, taken at regular intervals. The data may already exist in a computer database or spreadsheet, or it can be entered manually into the program itself.

All the programs accept univariate data (i.e., data involving a single variable). Some of the programs accept multivariate data. An example of multivariate data would be a time series showing average daily electricity usage and average daily temperature. Multivariate data can treat one independent variable as a leading indicator for another, dependent, variable.

The second step in forecasting is to analyze the time series. The programs apply a battery of statistical tests to the data, pro-

viding you with an array of graphical and numerical information. This information helps you determine whether the data contains certain characteristics relevant to forecasting: fluctuation around a constant level, a rising or falling trend, a seasonal pattern, or a nonseasonal cycle. You might also discover irregularities in the data that could have an impact on the forecast's reliability.

Using information from the data analysis, you select a mathematical model for the time series. Forecasting software selects or recommends the model to use and then implements the selected model. You never have to deal directly with the formulas.

With the model selected, you generate a forecast for a limited number of observation periods. Forecasts are typically limited to one cycle of observation periods (i.e., 12 months, four quarters, or 52 weeks into the future). However, where the time series consists of annual observations made over several decades, the forecast horizon might include up to 10 annual predictions. Forecast validity decreases rapidly as the forecast is extended beyond one cycle of observation periods.

A final, essential step in the process is attaching levels of confidence to the forecast. In addition to predicting specific numbers, the forecast must estimate the probability that the actual data will be above or below this prediction. Typically, the forecast spec-

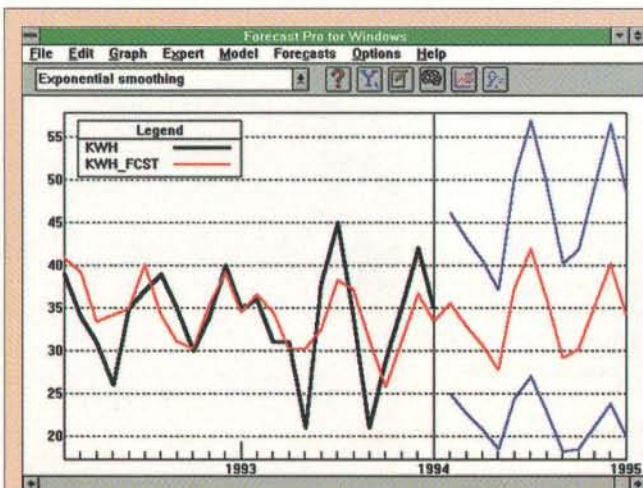
ifies a 95 percent confidence level associated with each prediction (i.e., a range within which the actual data is expected to fall with a 95 percent probability).

For practical purposes, this confidence level is more important than the actual predicted value. For example, to avoid running out of stock, a purchasing agent using a forecast to predict inventory requirements may find it prudent to order sufficient quantities to satisfy the 95 percent confidence level, rather than simply ordering the most likely forecast.

In evaluating and comparing the programs, I have considered the following characteristics: variety of forecasting methodologies offered; ease of use; quality of output, both numerical and graphical; degree of expert assistance provided; and flexibility or ability to customize the forecasting methods. I ran all the programs on a 66-MHz 486 Gateway system (the 486 has an on-chip math coprocessor). Even when processing a time series of several hundred observations, results came back almost instantaneously.

## FORECAST PRO FOR WINDOWS

Forecast Pro for Windows, from Business Forecast Systems, is the only reviewed package that runs as a full Windows application, so it provides some built-in



Forecast Pro wraps all the essential methodologies and forecasting features into an elegant Windows interface. It provides an efficient audit trail and DDE links to Windows spreadsheets and word processors. Shown here is a graph of the forecasted values along with confidence intervals (displayed on the right).

## Forecast Pro for Windows

Runs under Windows 3.x, NT, or OS/2 2.x  
Supports up to 50 variables  
(Extended edition supports 100 variables)

### Methodologies

- Simple moving averages
- Exponential smoothing
- Box-Jenkins
- Dynamic regression



## Reviews Forecasting the Future

advantages—such as DDE links between Forecast Pro and your other Windows applications. Three of Forecast Pro's supported methodologies are univariate (i.e., they look only at the behavior of a single variable). Dynamic regression calculates the relationship between a dependent variable and its historical values as well as the historical values of one or more independent variables.

Forecast Pro's audit-trail window operates as a notepad for automatic storage of the statistical data and expert advice generated by the program during the entire session. The notepad can be edited, stored, or printed. This important feature has no exact counterpart in the other programs.

To begin working with data, you click on the Tableau tool. The data tableau is where you specify the variables (univariate time series) you want to forecast or analyze. Available variables are displayed in a list box. If you select more than one variable, the first variable selected in a given tableau is treated as the dependent variable, and subsequent variables are treated as independent. After selecting one or more variables, you specify the portion of the time series to be considered and the number of forecasts desired. The program allows you to "hold out" a given number of observations from the end of the time series; you can then generate a forecast for the hold-out period and compare the forecast with what actually occurred in the period.

The next step is to view the data graphically. You can look at a plot of all the variables selected in the tableau. The graphs help you identify characteristics of your variables and relationships between them. You can also adjust the data by pointing to a location on the graph and dragging the value up or down. This shortcut lets you get rid of irregularities in the data that you do not want included in the forecast—for example, you might want to smooth out a "blip" caused by a freak occurrence.

To pick a forecast methodology, you select the Expert tool, which automatically performs a battery of data exploration tests, identifies the characteristics of the series, and recommends a forecasting model. The Forecast tool generates the forecast according to the selected model. You can then copy the forecast data to the audit trail and plot the forecast, along with the confidence limits.

You can save forecasts and recall them later for comparison with subsequent forecasts using different models. For instance, having forecast the variable KWH (kilo-

watt-hours) using Box-Jenkins, you might then forecast KWH using exponential smoothing and compare the two forecasts by recalling the Box-Jenkins model.

When you specify your own model (rather than relying on the Expert recommendation), Forecast Pro gives you plenty of flexibility in combining the applicable parameters. For example, under exponential smoothing, you can select simple, Holt, Winters, or a Custom model. The Custom model lets you specify the trend (none, linear, or damped) and seasonality (none, multiplicative, or additive).

Forecast Pro also includes a batch mode for forecasts (univariate only) of up to 50 time series without need for your intervention. Dynamic regression is not available in batch mode.

Forecast Pro offers only rudimentary facilities for entering and editing time series. For instance, if you inadvertently omit an observation from the middle of a series, you can't insert the number into the series; you must retype the series beginning with the omitted value. You'll probably choose to enter your data from a spreadsheet, editor, or database application.

Overall, the program and its documentation are designed to make forecasting an interesting and enjoyable process for the total beginner. At the same time, the program has the power and flexibility a more experienced forecaster would require.

### SMARTFORECAST

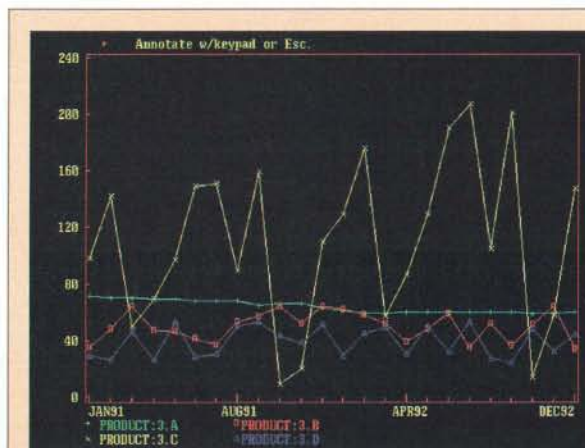
SmartForecast opens with a spreadsheet window and a menu. Each column in the spreadsheet corresponds to a variable, and each row to an observation. You can enter

data directly into the spreadsheet or load it from a disk file. As with Forecast Pro, this program automatically labels the rows according to the time of the observation. Data entry and editing under SmartForecast are particularly convenient. For example, you can insert a value in the middle of a time series, and you can define new variables by transformations on existing variables.

Data analysis is straightforward under SmartForecast via the Explore mode. For instance, the Correlate option works on a single variable to show autocorrelations (e.g., seasonality), or on two variables to determine whether one variable may be a leading indicator of the other. Results of the computations can be copied into a new variable in the program's built-in spreadsheet. The upper and lower confidence limits, the forecast, and the fit (i.e., values of the model during the base period) can be saved individually to the spreadsheet. You can output the tabular results to a printer, but, regrettably, you cannot save them to disk (compare this with Forecast Pro, which keeps all the statistical reports in an audit trail).

Having completed the analysis phase, SmartForecast selects a model or lets you choose your own. As with Forecast Pro, you can specify the applicable parameters for each methodology chosen. The Multi-series option produces automatic forecasts of up to 60 related variables and a total of these forecasts. This is a convenient feature for forecasting sales of an entire product line, for instance.

The Eyeball option lets you adjust forecasts manually using "business judgment" or "management overrides." The feature is intended to give you greater flexibility and



SmartForecast is a comprehensive forecasting program with an intuitive keyboard interface, but it lacks the design elegance of Forecast Pro. With its graphical display of multivariate data, SmartForecast highlights data dependencies.

### SmartForecast

Runs under DOS 3.0 or higher  
Supports up to 60 variables (260 observations per variable)

#### Methodologies

- Simple moving averages
- Exponential smoothing
- Box-Jenkins
- Dynamic regression



control, but it seems ill-conceived. The program does not document the manual changes made in the forecast graph, and a person looking at the forecast after the fact could get the mistaken impression that the graph was generated by objective methods.

SmartForecast is a comprehensive forecasting program with an intuitive keyboard interface (i.e., single-key command menus and submenus). You can maneuver quickly through the program to generate automatic or customized forecasts. However, it lacks the design elegance of Forecast Pro. For example, there's no convenient way to export tabular statistical results to disk for further incorporation into word processing documents. The program also lacks a convenient way of holding out data to verify forecasting accuracy. (You can, however, perform hold-outs indirectly by copying the time series into a new variable and inserting "missing" values for the period to be held out.)

The Batch Processing Edition of SmartForecast lets you make forecasts involving hundreds of individual data files and thousands of time series, using automatic model selection or a model you specify in advance.

## SOLO STATISTICAL SOFTWARE

This DOS-based package from BMDP Statistical Software consists of a Base System plus optional modules, including the Forecasting and Time Series module reviewed here. The Base System offers simple moving averages and exponential smoothing. The FTS module adds Box-Jenkins and harmonic regression methodologies.

From Solo's Transfer menu, you select the Base System functions as well as add-on modules such as FTS. The program contains a spreadsheet with editing capabilities, such as selective copying and erasing of observations. Unlike Forecast Pro and SmartForecast, this program does not have a facility for automatically labeling observations (rows) by the date of observation; you must do this manually. And even if you take the trouble to label rows according to the time, dates do not appear in the output; the program simply references the time variable by the row number in which the data appears. Solo does include a number of transformation functions and keyboard macros to automate repetitive tasks.

To begin data analysis in Solo, you select the Time Series menu. Three of the options facilitate manual analysis without expert recommendations. Another option performs classical forecasting (i.e., linear trend, single and double exponential smoothing, season plus trend multiplicative, and season plus trend additive). In addition to specifying a forecasting method, you can specify the values of the smoothing constants. Only the Box-Jenkins forecasts are accompanied by explicit confidence limits.

The forecast output appears as a graph, where observations are discrete points and the forecast is shown as a continuous line. This makes it somewhat difficult to visually gauge the goodness of fit between the model and the historical data. On the plus side, Solo lets you designate a report file to contain all statistical output from the program.

Compared to Forecast Pro and SmartForecast, Solo is difficult to learn and requires a greater level of knowledge about statistics.

## AUTOCAST II

Autocast II, a DOS-based program from Delphus, provides single-variable forecasting based on exponential smoothing. It is the simplest to use of the four programs reviewed. And because of the general applicability of exponential smoothing, the program is fit for a wide range of uses.

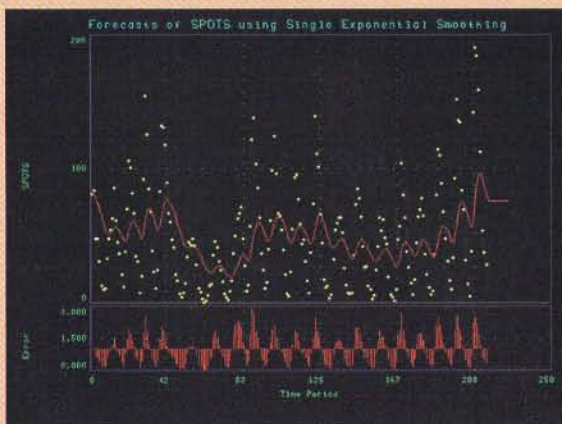
For inputting data, Autocast II includes a single-variable "worksheet" for entering a time series. You can also import data created with Lotus 1-2-3 or other programs, so long as the data is properly formatted. Associated with each Autocast II data file is a short description of the data, the season length, and the beginning date of the time series. Therefore, it is not necessary to manually specify the dates of each individual observation, as with Solo. Autocast II's data editor also lets you insert and delete records, which is handy when you inadvertently omit an observation in the middle of a series.

After you have entered or loaded a time series, you are ready to have Autocast II prepare an initial automatic forecast, based on its own expert estimation of the most appropriate exponential smoothing model to use. It is appropriate to go directly to automatic forecasting in this program, skipping the model-selection stage, since all the modeling is done with exponential smoothing.

On the graph, historical data appears as a solid line, and forecast and modeled values appear as discrete points. Confidence limits are shown with solid lines. The use of discrete points to show the modeled data makes comparison with historical data a little difficult (as with Solo).

For refinement of the model or possible selection of an alternative, you use the Analysis menu. You compare the plot to a set of forecast profiles (graphs of the profiles appear in the manual). Such a comparison could suggest, for example, that a particular time series exhibits multiple seasonality with a linear trend.

For further assistance in selecting a model, you can examine variance, autocorrelation, and the use of transformations to increase the stationarity of the data (i.e., remove long-term trend effects). The instructions for evaluating this information are simple and to the point. The variance and autocorrelation options do not change anything, but they give you information



Solo graphs observations as discrete points and the forecast as a continuous line. This makes it somewhat difficult to gauge the goodness of fit between the model and the historical data. Compared to Forecast Pro and SmartForecast, Solo is difficult to learn and requires a greater level of knowledge about statistics.

### Solo

Base System 4.0 with Time Series and Forecasting module

Runs on DOS 3.x

Supports up to 500 variables (32,000 observations total)

#### Methodologies

- Simple moving averages
- Exponential smoothing
- Box-Jenkins
- Harmonic regression



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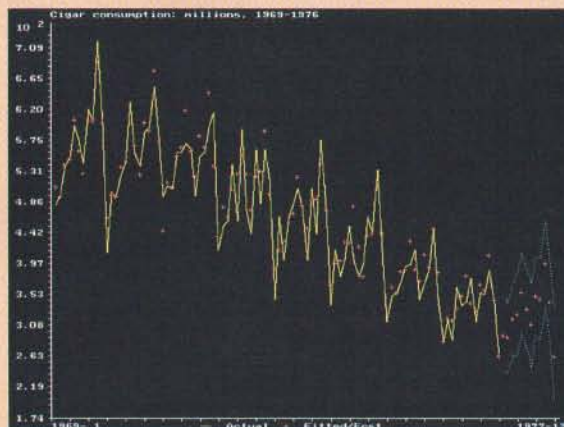
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## Reviews Forecasting the Future



Autocast II provides single-variable forecasting based on exponential smoothing. It can display data, a graphical depiction of the forecast model, and confidence intervals.

### Autocast II

Runs on DOS 3.x

Univariate (one variable only)

Supports up to 500 observations

#### Methodologies

- Exponential smoothing
- 4CAST/2 from Delphus, a separate product not reviewed here, adds other methodologies, including Box-Jenkins

useful in making a manual model selection. The autocorrelation option lets you perform indicated transformations on the data. Multiple transformations are allowed.

The program makes it so easy to modify the forecasting model that you can quickly lose track of the current model, so it's essential that you print a model-fitting report with each forecast. Unfortunately, the program does not allow you to store the model-fitting reports to disk. As a further means of testing the validity of a model, Autocast II lets you hold back part of the historical data, build a model using the remaining data, and compare the forecast with what actually occurred. As with Forecast Pro and SmartForecast, Autocast II offers a batch-processing module to allow automatic forecasting of multiple time series.

If you are looking for an easy-to-use forecasting program and your data does not require Box-Jenkins methodology, Autocast II is a good choice.

### Caveat Forecasters

All four programs reviewed here offer expert-system forecasting for nonexperts. With the exception of Solo, all the programs are well suited to the lay person who wants to do statistical forecasting of time series without becoming too deeply involved in statistics.

Forecast Pro wraps all the essential methodologies and forecasting features into an elegant Windows interface. It is the only program reviewed that provides an efficient audit trail and DDE links to Windows spreadsheets and word processors. Forecast Pro strikes an optimal mix between the ease-of-use features that a novice forecaster seeks and the power and flexibility an experienced forecaster requires. ■

George Stewart is a former BYTE editor living in Hancock, New Hampshire. He has a B.A. in mathematics and a degree in law. He can be reached on the Internet or BIX c/o editors@bix.com.

### About the Products

**Autocast II 1.50** .....\$349

Delphus, Inc.  
103 Washington St., Suite 348  
Morristown, NJ 07960  
(201) 267-9269  
fax: (201) 285-1228

Circle 1078 on Inquiry Card.

**Forecast Pro for Windows**

Standard edition .....\$595  
Extended edition .....\$995

Business Forecast Systems, Inc.  
68 Leonard St.  
Belmont, MA 02178  
(617) 484-5050  
fax: (617) 484-9219

Circle 1079 on Inquiry Card.

**SmartForecast**

Standard edition 3.0 .....\$595

Smart Software, Inc.  
4 Hill Rd.  
Belmont, MA 02178  
(617) 489-2743  
fax: (617) 489-2748

Circle 1080 on Inquiry Card.

**Solo Statistical Software**

Base System (includes graphics) .....\$195  
Time Series and Forecasting module .....\$95

BMDP Statistical Software, Inc.  
1440 Sepulveda Blvd., Suite 386  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
(310) 479-7799  
fax: (310) 312-0161

Circle 1081 on Inquiry Card.



# Novell's Newest DOS

**Novell's DOS 7 offers multitasking, memory management, and peer-to-peer networking. Is it a better DOS than Microsoft's?**

TERJE MATHISEN

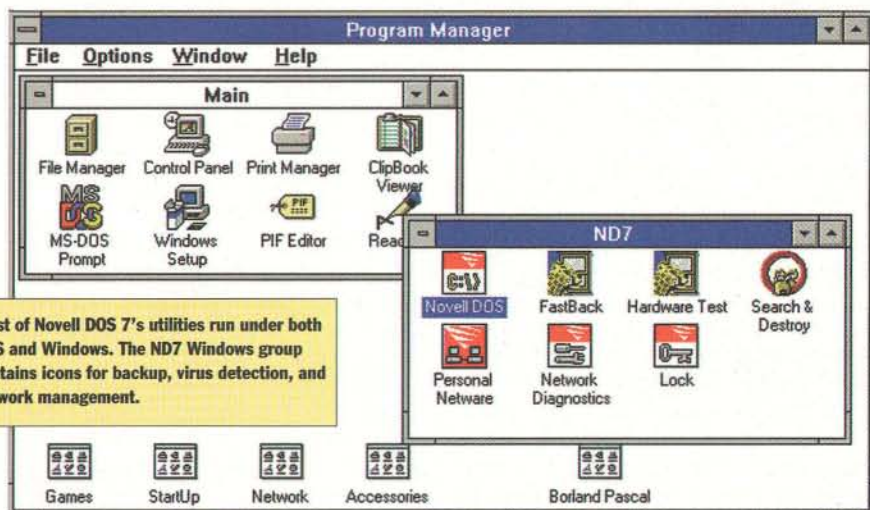
**N**ovell and Microsoft have been sharing our desktop machines for almost a decade. Microsoft supplied the operating system (MS-DOS), while Novell delivered the file and print servers for the same PCs. Then Microsoft went after a bigger share of the networking business, while Novell bought Digital Research and its DOS-compatible operating system.

Novell DOS 7 (ND7) is targeted at existing MS-DOS installations and is intended as a direct replacement for MS-DOS 6.2. ND7 bills itself as a better DOS than MS-DOS, mainly on the strength of a multitasking kernel, better memory management, improved utilities, and a built-in copy of Personal NetWare, Novell's peer-to-peer network operating system. (Of course, however, if Novell really wanted to challenge Microsoft, it could bundle ND7 with NetWare, giving large corporations a single vendor for both PC and server operating systems.) The universal NetWare client software included in the package supports all NetWare servers from version 2.x to 4.0, on almost every network card anyone could want.

## The Parts

ND7 consists of three main parts—DOS, Universal NetWare Client, and Personal NetWare—plus a volley of bundled third-party utilities. Its multitasking kernel makes low-overhead DOS multitasking available; the only thing that's needed is TASKMGR.EXE, which uses a scant 3 to 4 KB.

On both 286 and 386 machines, ND7 can use DPMS (DOS Protected Mode Services) to run compliant drivers fully or partly in protected mode. ND7 comes with DPMS versions of disk cache, disk compression, and CD-ROM drivers. The disk cache (NWCACHE) is licensed from Golden Bow systems, while the disk compression is a version of Stac Electronics' Stacker. When you install ND7, Stacker can convert AddStor's SuperStor and Microsoft's DoubleSpace drives on the fly. Stacker's Restack option gives you improved file-compression ratios.



ND7 is bundled with Fastback Express, from Fifth Generation Systems. Both DOS and Windows versions are included. Fifth Generation also supplies the bundled Search & Destroy antivirus package for DOS and Windows.

## Installation

I installed ND7 on my main test PC (a Compaq EISA Pentium with 1.5 GB of disk space, 40 MB of RAM, a 21-inch Solora/Nokia low-emission monitor, and an NEC 3X CD-ROM drive). As part of the installation process, ND7 saves away all the necessary information, to make it possible to uninstall later. That's a good idea, but it's where the first problem surfaced.

I use the Norton Utilities NDOS COMMAND.COM replacement. All the current system files are renamed and made read-only and hidden as part of the DOS 7 installation. ND7's installation will also parse the existing CONFIG.SYS file for a SHELL= line and do the same rename operation on whatever file happens to be named there. This would have worked, except that the installation script got too fancy. If SHELL= in CONFIG.SYS points at a replacement for COMMAND.COM, the line is not modified, even though the file itself has been renamed and hidden. When the installation program finished and I was told to reboot to start ND7, I ended up with the error message: Bad or missing command interpreter; Please enter a

valid filename. I was able to start the system by entering C:\COMMAND.COM, but this is an embarrassing bug for Novell.

Later, to test ND7's Personal NetWare functionality, I used an IBM Model P75 portable. This PC had MS-DOS 5.0 and QEMM 6 installed. When I tried to run A:\INSTALL, it started by copying a couple of setup files to drive C and then promptly hung, without any error messages. After rebooting, I simplified my CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files as much as possible, loading only HIMEM.SYS and the Norwegian keyboard driver. I still got the same error.

So I then tried to boot directly off the ND7 installation disk. When I did, however, I got a very interesting error message: BETA DEBUG: TCXL Error. This looked very much like beta-test code that was left inside the shipping product. It must have been triggered by a bug never expected by the developers and not caught during the beta cycle.

I finally did what I should have done before starting: I read the readme file on the installation disk. The file had a special section about how some portable machines were incompatible with the default enhanced-text mode used by SETUP (and several of the bundled programs). To fix my problem, I could use SETUP /N to run in regular text mode, or, to solve it permanently, I could insert NewUI=OFF in SETUP.INI—which is what I did.

*continued*



## FILE-READ PERFORMANCE

Results of timing tests on Personal NetWare. I timed a copy operation of seven files, totaling about 1.5 MB. I copied in both directions between the 25-MHz 486 and the 20-MHz 386, from regular FAT (file allocation table) and compressed Stacker volumes. The speed varies by a factor of 3 from the slowest (386/20 to 486/33) to the fastest (486/33 to 486/25). The most interesting result was that the Cheetah 486/25 gave consistently better results than the IBM 486/33. This must have been due to differences in the network cards and drivers (the Cheetah has a Novell NE2000, and the IBM uses the IBM 16-bit Micro Channel Ether-net Adapter). Results are in KBps.

SERVER	CLIENT		
	486/33	486/25	386/20
486/33	—	233	91
486/25	163	—	96
386/20	84	120	—

## Disk Compression

I have an old 20-MHz 386 Toshiba 5200 portable machine, which has its 100-MB hard drive split into two partitions. This machine used DoubleSpace to compress drive D and claimed 10 MB of free disk space. When I installed ND7, DoubleSpace was still autoloaded by the ND7 kernel to support the compressed drive D. I then restarted SETUP, and it offered to convert my DoubleSpace drives to Stacker drives. After about 30 seconds, the system informed me that I didn't "have enough room on drive F to convert all the volumes on it" and that I had to free at least 514,048 bytes by removing files or resizing the DoubleSpace drive.

After restarting the PC, I tried to resize the DoubleSpace drives by running the MS-DOS 6.2 command DBLSPACE /SIZE /RESERVE=514048, whereupon I was told that both the minimum and maximum size of the drive was 67 MB. I then ran DBLSPACE /DEFRAGMENT to pack all the data into the first part of the compressed drive, which would make it possible to resize it. DoubleSpace finished defragmenting the disk after nearly 2 hours, and I then ran DBLSPACE /SIZE again (which took another 15 to 30 minutes).

Finally, I restarted ND7's DoubleSpace-to-Stacker conversion process. Almost immediately, another serious bug surfaced: Stacker refused to perform the conversion process because it could not locate the DOS system files IMBIO.COM and IBMDS.COM. MS-DOS 6.2 uses the generic Microsoft names for these files, IO.SYS and MSDOS.SYS, so the IBM version of the filenames could not be found.

To solve this problem, I copied the MS-DOS system files, changing the names to the IBM standard to satisfy Stacker. By using the /H (hidden) option to ND7's XCOPY, I could copy these files without

having to remove the ReadOnly, Hidden, and System attributes from them first. Finally, on the fourth attempt, Stacker accepted the drive for conversion. The actual conversion process took all of 11 seconds, after hours of preparation.

## Compatibility

By far the most important criterion for an alternative DOS is compatibility. Novell's Desktop Operating System group has done a very good job of polishing up DOS, but there are still a few dings and dents. The first thing I noticed missing was the built-in TRUENAME operation in COM-MAND.COM, which has been a documented part of MS-DOS since version 5.0. This command will take any filename or path name and return a canonical version of it. For example, if \BC4\BIN is the current directory on drive D, TRUENAME D: will return D:\BC4\BIN\.

I wrote a test program to see if the supporting DOS API call was available, and it worked, both on local and networked drives. This program, TRUENAME.COM, is just 96 bytes and is available for other ND7 users to download. When I tried TRUENAME.COM on my CD-ROM, TRUENAME E: returned Cdex. E:\. This is a serious bug, since many popular programs use this API to parse path names. Most of them will likely choke on the non-standard return value.

I found another small problem with the CD-ROM: My test machine uses an Adaptec 1740 EISA adapter to support the second hard drive (a 1-GB Hewlett-Packard SCSI-2 drive) and the CD-ROM drive. The Adaptec CD-ROM support software was installed under MS-DOS 6.2 and has worked very well with that version. With ND7, the second of the two drivers gives an error message, "Cannot locate SCSI Manager," but it still loads, and the CD-ROM seems to work just like before.

ND7 apparently emulates the (partly) undocumented internal DOS structures very well, masquerading as MS-DOS 6.x. The emulation is good enough that Microsoft Diagnostic (MSD.EXE) is fooled, but some of the information shown in MSD, particularly the UMB (Upper Memory Block) display, is obviously wrong. This suggests that ND7 uses a different scheme to manage these blocks, but the UMB APIs work well enough that a program I wrote a couple of years ago that relocates itself into a UMB worked perfectly without any modifications.

## Windows Compatibility

When I first installed ND7, I had Windows for Workgroups 3.11 installed on my PC—not because of the peer-to-peer networking functions (which I don't use), but because WFW has better performance than Windows 3.1, particularly due to 32-bit file and disk access. ND7 did not complain about running WFW, and everything seemed to work OK as long as I was using Windows programs or working on a local drive.

After a couple of hours, I needed to update an old Pascal program, so I started Borland's Turbo Pascal (BP7) inside a DOS box. The source code was in my default directory on a NetWare 4.01 server. It loaded fine, and it found all the files I had been working on last. I made a few changes and pressed the F9 key to rebuild the program. At this point, BP7 complained about not finding any files.

After snooping around, I found that the problem is located in the Get and Set Current Directory functions (INT 21, functions 47h and 3Bh). With WFW loaded, I consistently ended up at the root of the network drive (I:\) instead of at my source directory (I:\BPASRC). When I reinstalled Windows 3.1 instead of WFW, the problems disappeared.

To test Win32s compatibility, I installed the Win32s support code, which consists mostly of VxDs (virtual device drivers). This code ran without a glitch, and all the demonstration programs from the Windows NT SDK (Software Development Kit) CD-ROM that I tried ran without any problems.

The only consistent problem I found in the Windows 3.1 support was with a few utility programs written in Borland Pascal and quickly converted to run inside Windows by using Borland's WinCRT unit. These programs run well under Windows 3.1, WFW, and NT, but after ND7 is installed, the system complains about a



General Protection Fault and aborts the program. I have a suspicion that this might be related to the DPMI (DOS Protected Mode Interface) support in ND7, since I get exactly the same error messages when I try to run these programs under OS/2 2.1.

### Personal NetWare

The last component of the ND7 package is a bundled copy of Novell's peer-to-peer network product, Personal NetWare. To use it, at least one PC must be designated as a server and make some of its resources available for sharing on the network. PCs that act only as clients can use the Universal Client to access both NetWare servers and Personal NetWare servers.

I first installed Personal NetWare on the 20-MHz 386 Toshiba portable. This almost worked, except that the SETUP program modified my existing (working) NET.CFG configuration file and substituted the default parameters for my network card. When I next rebooted, the adapter driver declined to load. I had to locate the problem manually, edit the NET.CFG entries back to the proper values, and reboot. It is a good idea to make a

copy of your NET.CFG before you let ND7 mess around with it.

Personal NetWare comes with Novell's new Universal Client software, based on the VLM (virtual loadable module) technology developed for Novell's high-end NetWare 4.01. With a single installation, the new VLM driver set lets a PC access both Personal NetWare servers and all the versions of dedicated NetWare servers (from 2.2 to 4.01), and it uses less low memory than the old-style NETX driver.

I have measured extremely high performance on both Ethernet and 16-Mb Token Ring using these drivers to access a NetWare 4.01 server—1.03-Mbps sustained throughput for a single connection doing large reads on Ethernet and 1.76-Mbps on Token Ring—so I was curious about the performance offered by Personal NetWare. The network software's performance was adequate, but it was a large step below what you can get from a dedicated NetWare 3.11 or 4.01 server. The "File-Read Performance" table on page 242 gives you some idea of what I found.

For a small workgroup like the one in my home, the most critical criterion is how

much the foreground task on a peer server is affected by background activity. When my son Fredrik wanted to play Lemmings 2 on the 25-MHz 486, I started the game for him and then started to copy big files to and from the 486. The little animated lemmings in the game just kept moving, without any delays or stutters.

### Multitasking

Task-switching support is built in, starting with a multitasking kernel that supports programs written for the old Multiuser DR DOS. The memory manager, EMM386.EXE, also supports multitasking, with a MULTI option on the command line. According to the manual, this even makes it possible to multitask protected-mode DOS programs.

To test this capability, I loaded the Borland Pascal environment in one session and then used the protected-mode version of Turbo Assembler, TASMx, to assemble a program in another session. This immediately blew up, giving me a full-screen version of the infamous General Protection Fault message. I shouldn't have expected anything else, really, since the same

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thing happens in a Windows DOS machine and under OS/2 2.1. I was able to successfully run Borland C++ 3.1, which uses another non-DPMI-compliant DOS extender. This program does not run under OS/2, but it worked OK with TASKMGR.

TASKMGR works like Windows Enhanced Mode or OS/2 by creating V86 (virtual 8086) machines, giving each session the illusion that it has its own CPU. This means that TASKMGR, in cooperation with EMM386, must act as the V86 monitor, intercepting all hardware interrupts in protected mode and redirecting them to the current DOS program, which then handles them as if in real mode.

In theory, this should all work well, but since the redirection uses quite a few cycles, it can mess up time-critical operations. In OS/2 and Windows, this particular problem is fixed by writing protected-

mode handlers for things like keyboard, mouse, and serial communications. These drivers then virtualize the hardware on behalf of the DOS programs, fooling them into believing that they have direct hardware access.

On my hardware, the mouse worked perfectly well in multiple loaded programs. Communication was another matter, however: I had to step down to 19.2 Kbps to keep a file transfer running in the background,

and the effective baud rate dropped to about 1.4 Kbps.

I use my machines mainly for software development, working in a DOS environment. I liked ND7's approach to multitasking since it made it easy for me to start a new session at any time to test out a new program or look up an on-line reference.

## The DOS Dilemma

ND7 is an impressive package that could have used a more thorough beta testing be-

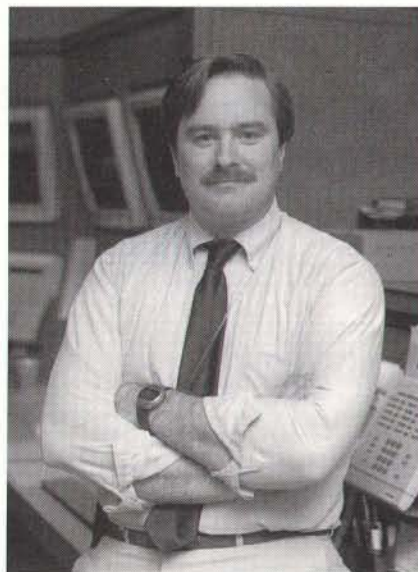
fore release. Most of the problems I found were minor, but they could have been eliminated completely. If nothing else, Novell's continued development of Novell DOS should keep Microsoft on its toes.

ND7 makes the most sense for companies that are already using Digital Research's old Concurrent DOS, as well as for companies that need many of the bundled features. For Windows-only users, Personal NetWare has to compete with Windows for Workgroups, which gives roughly the same feature mix but keeps all the networking software in protected mode, out of the DOS arena. I'm planning to keep Novell DOS 7 installed on my home machines, but for the office PC, I'll wait for a bug-fix release that solves the CD-ROM problems. ■

Editor's note: *TRUENAME.COM* is available electronically. See page 5 for details.

*Terje Mathisen is a software developer for Norsk Hydro in Oslo, Norway. He has been developing high-performance IBM-compatible software since 1981. He can be reached on the Internet at [terjem@hda.hydro.com](mailto:terjem@hda.hydro.com) or on BIX as "terjem."*

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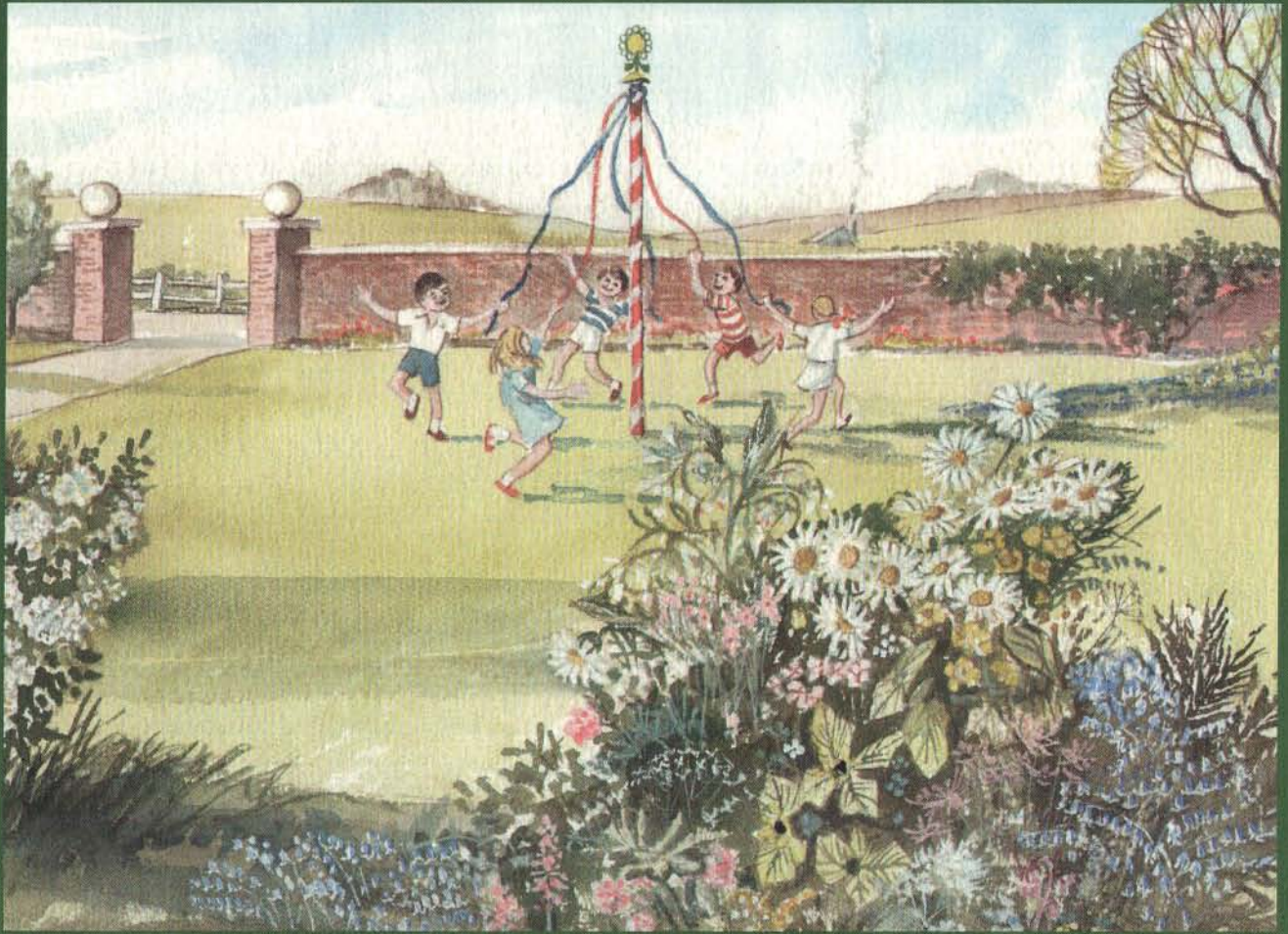
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## HANDS-ON TESTING

## 66 ETHERNET ADAPTERS

Our application tests identify the best NICs, PCMCIA cards, and parallel-port adapters for Ethernet networks

ANTHONY J. LENNON

Whether you're setting up an Ethernet client workstation or just trying to connect your notebook to an in-house LAN, here's a guide for finding the best network adapter for your needs. We examined 35 16-bit NICs (network interface cards) for ISA systems, 15 portable adapters that connect via a parallel port, and 16 credit-card-size PCMCIA cards. Using our application benchmarks, we ranked the best products in each technology class for both speed and how easily each can be installed and used on a network. Our tests focused on Ethernet because it is the most popular networking scheme.

Standard 16-bit NICs, the best solution for desktop client workstations, are mature products. Their prices continue to fall, and installation problems centered around tedious jumper and DIP-switch settings are becoming a thing of the past (see "The Best 16-bit NICs" on page 248). Compared to their portable counterparts, NICs cost less (by an average of \$135), but each NIC is tied to one desktop unit.

PCMCIA adapters are relatively expensive (\$257 on average), but they are the ideal solution for mobile systems that have PCMCIA Type II slots. We found that installation and compatibility problems are a rarity if C&S (Card and Socket Services) software is installed on the host and if only one PCMCIA card is installed (see "The Best PCMCIA Cards" on page 252).

### How to use this guide

To find the best network adapter for your needs, follow the main headings until you come to the appropriate hardware category (i.e., 16-bit ISA, PCMCIA, or portable). Then look at the summary charts (like the exam-

ple below) to find our choices for the best overall and the best low-cost adapters. We selected adapters by choosing the ones with the best mix of performance, features, usability, and, for the low-cost category, price.

A performance index relative to our standard NIC, a National Semiconductor InfoMover NE2000plus. A higher number equals faster speed.

An evaluation of the simplicity of configuration and driver installation, and documentation quality.

#### BEST OVERALL 3Com EtherLink III

A proprietary Ethernet controller helped this NIC score the best overall performance in our application-based performance tests. Similarly, the EtherLink III's ease-of-use and features scores were both among the highest of the NICs we tested. Installation is a breeze, thanks to a menu-driven configuration and diagnostic utility. The AutoLink software automatically configures the adapter and downloads the NetWare DOS client files from the server—or loads the standard DOS client files if no server is found. The card uses parallel testing, a technique that breaks down network-adaptor tasks into steps that are performed simultaneously to improve performance. The adapter's driver software automatically adjusts the timing of operations in overlapped task pipelines. Twisted-pair and thick-coaxial cable connectors are standard.



Higher ratings indicate products that had complete sets of installation and diagnostic software, among other factors.

Important software that configures the adapter so it doesn't conflict with other devices in the host system.

	PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	CONFIGURATION	NETWORK DRIVER	DOC	TESTS	OVERALL
3Com EtherLink III	\$143	1.07	AAAA	AAAA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adaptec EtherCard-16	\$90	1.00	AAAA	AAAA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adaptec EtherExpress Flash TP	\$130	0.99	AAAA	AAAA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SMC Ether16T Ultra	\$129	1.04	AAAA	AA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

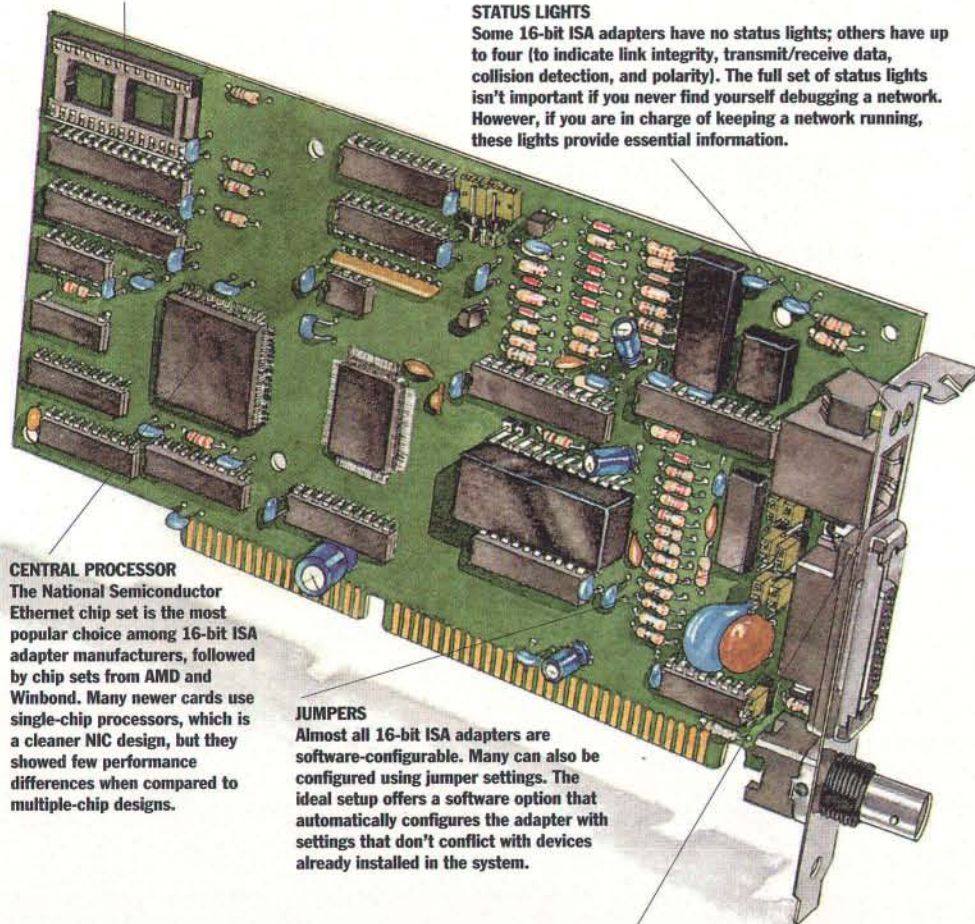
The major benefit of parallel-port adapters is that they can be installed in just seconds on either desktop or mobile systems. Pocket adapters are self-configuring. With EPP (Enhanced Parallel Port) support, these adapters cost the same on average as their PCMCIA counterparts, but they cannot match their speed: In our suite of tests, the PCMCIA adapters outperformed the portable adapters (in EPP mode) by an average of 11 percent.



## Network Interface Cards

### BOOT-ROM SOCKET

With a boot ROM, you can boot a diskless DOS workstation from a network. Keeping DOS and all your software on the network makes software maintenance a lot easier, but it places a heavier load on the server.



### STATUS LIGHTS

Some 16-bit ISA adapters have no status lights; others have up to four (to indicate link integrity, transmit/receive data, collision detection, and polarity). The full set of status lights isn't important if you never find yourself debugging a network. However, if you are in charge of keeping a network running, these lights provide essential information.

### JUMPERS

Almost all 16-bit ISA adapters are software-configurable. Many can also be configured using jumper settings. The ideal setup offers a software option that automatically configures the adapter with settings that don't conflict with devices already installed in the system.

## PCMCIA Cards

### LEDs

Clear status lights are essential for fast diagnosis of network problems.



### MEDIA ACCESS MODULE (MAM)

For easiest installation, look for modules that can plug directly into an Ethernet hub. The adapters in our test sample from Boca, CNet, 3Com, and Xircom offered this feature.

### RJ-45, BNC, AND AUI PORTS

Most networks use either UTP (unshielded twisted-pair) or coaxial (thin Ethernet) cabling. These cabling schemes can be mixed, since most UTP hubs have a coaxial connection. Buying a NIC with both RJ-45 and BNC connectors will allow you future flexibility. A third type of connector—AUI, or thick Ethernet—is available on many cards.

## Portable Adapters

### EPP SUPPORT

For fastest speed, choose adapters that offer EPP (Enhanced Parallel Port) support. These adapters offer throughput levels that are as much as 50 percent higher than those for adapters with only unidirectional support, although prices for EPP products average about \$100 more.



## 16-BIT NIC

### 3Com EtherLink III

The top performer in our application-based benchmarks, this 16-bit NIC uses parallel tasking to shorten the data transfer cycle with predictive interrupts and pipelining. Its AutoLink software automatically configures the adapter and loads the appropriate network client software. The EtherLink III supports twisted-pair and thick coaxial cabling.

PAGE 249

## PCMCIA CARD

### 3Com EtherLink III PCMCIA

Like its NIC cousin, this adapter uses pipelining to improve packet-processing speed and provide the best performance in its class. The installation software automatically configures the card and loads the necessary files to configure the host system as a NetWare DOS ODI (Open Data-Link Interface) client. Comprehensive diagnostic utilities and an LED indicator on the card aid in diagnosing network problems.

PAGE 255

## PORTABLE ADAPTER

### Compex Para Port-E

The Compex Para Port-E offers EPP support and one of the fastest performance scores for this group. The adapter draws power from the host's keyboard connector (an external AC adapter is optional) and includes a printer pass-through port. Four LEDs for diagnosing network problems are provided, along with BNC and RJ-45 connectors. The NetWare ODI driver automatically sets the adapter to the highest performance mode supported by the host's parallel port.

PAGE 257



## THE BEST

## 16-BIT NICS

**P**rices for 16-bit ISA Ethernet NICs average \$147 less than PCMCIA adapters and \$129 less than parallel-port adapters, and NIC prices continue to drop. For example, the NICs in this report, which cost an average of \$110, average \$60 less than those in our August 1993 Lab Report (see "Network Connections: 100 Ethernet Cards"). At the same time, vendors have improved reliability through enhanced chip integration. As a result, almost a third of the NICs in this review carry lifetime warranties, compared to only 15 percent of the adapters in the August Lab Report.

As a group, NICs are becoming easier than ever to install and use. For example, a minority of the cards we tested last year were software-configurable, while all the NICs in this roundup offer this capability. (Note, however, that the GVC NIC-2003BT uses software to configure the emulation mode only; you must change other settings through hardware.) Almost half of the NICs in this report—and all the NICs ranked as best overall—come with automatic-configuration software. By contrast, only the top three low-cost cards offer this feature.

As in our last network-hardware report, we found NIC performance to be relatively uniform. For example, the difference between the fastest and the slowest NIC ranked as best overall was only 8 percent. So a database file that took 12.5 seconds to load from a network when using the fastest card would take only 1 second longer with the slower NIC.

While the 3Com EtherLink III offers the best mix of performance, ease of use, and features, the cards we've ranked as runners-up are also solid performers. The second-ranked Alta EtherCombo-16+ T/C ran only 7 percent slower than the top-ranked EtherLink III. In addition, the EtherCombo comes with Novell NetWare, Unix, and NDIS boot ROMs; SMC/Western Digital and NE2000 emulation; and four LEDs for diagnosing network problems. Alta also includes a diagnostic utility that lets you view packets on the network, similar to the way that a LAN analyzer displays packets.

Intel's third-ranked EtherExpress Flash TP comes bundled with several utilities for network administrators. A FlashStart program, stored in a flash-memory chip, automatically loads after you power up the system. The program can configure the adapter and download drivers from the file server. The flash-memory chip also comes with boot programs for NetWare or Microsoft

## HASSLE-FREE NICS

**For simplicity in ease of installation and use, choose a NIC with the following features (see the Roll Call on pages 260 through 263 for details on individual products):**

**Configuration Software**

Utilities that automatically configure a NIC for the host system are ideal; nearly half of the NICs in this review can be configured automatically. The software alters configuration settings such as the base I/O address, IRQ (interrupt request) setting, DMA channel, and RAM address, which eliminates the need for tedious jumper and DIP-switch hardware. Moreover, you can quickly modify a board's configuration without having to open up the system to access NIC switches.

**Diagnostic Software**

All but two of the NICs reviewed here offer some type of software bundle to help you troubleshoot network problems. The best packages include diagnostics for loopback and interstation transmission testing, plus the ability to gather statistics on frame overruns and collisions.

**Network Drivers**

NICs should provide multiple drivers to support your current needs (e.g., Novell NetWare server, ODI, IPX, NDIS, NetBIOS, and Unix) as well as network operating systems you may add in the future (e.g., NetWare clients for Windows NT).

**Boot ROMs**

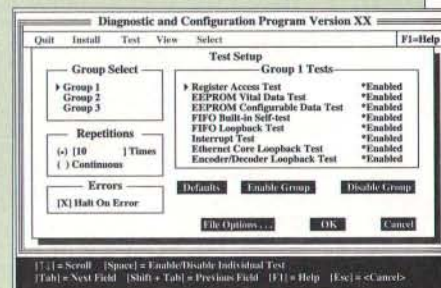
Boot ROMs allow diskless workstations to attach to a network. Our evaluations gave the highest marks to NICs that offered boot ROMs for at least two different network operating systems.

**Status Lights**

LED indicators for items such as packet transmit/receive, link integrity, and collision detection help you to diagnose problems quickly.

**Documentation**

Finally, don't overlook the quality of the manuals that come with a NIC. Clear instructions for installing the adapter and its drivers save you time. In our evaluations, we also placed importance on the presence of a glossary and whether technical-support information was easily accessible.





LAN Manager, so you don't need to purchase and install separate boot ROMs on diskless workstations.

A second utility allows the network administrator to update drivers centrally on the file server. Each workstation on the network receives the updated files when users log on.

The Standard Microsystems Elite16T Ultra includes a two-node utility that tests the adapter's ability to communicate over a network with another adapter. Racial InterLan provides a number of internal and network diagnostic tests for its EtherBlaster TP adapter, and Allied Telesis's CardAssistant diagnostic routine tests the AT-1500BT Plus adapter and its configuration for functional problems or conflicts with other installed devices.

The Elite16T Ultra uses a proprietary Ethernet controller and provides slightly better overall performance than the AT-1500BT Plus and the EtherBlaster TP, which use AMD Ethernet controllers.

In the low-cost (under \$90) category, the winning Longshine LCS-8634L-TBA and runner-up Kingston EtherX 2000 Plus Triple Interface have documentation

that lacks technical-support information, but the manuals are clearly written and contain numerous charts and diagrams. The CeLAN E2000C's documentation is a single sheet of paper that lists jumper settings and available network drivers. But the E2000C is the only card in this group with a lifetime warranty. The three top NICs can be automatically configured, unlike the remaining three adapters in this category.

#### KEY

Poor ▲ Fair ▲▲  
Good ▲▲▲ Excellent ▲▲▲▲  
Yes = ✓

## BYTE BEST

## NETWORK INTERFACE CARDS

### For speed and easy configuration...

#### BEST OVERALL

#### 3Com EtherLink III



A proprietary Ethernet controller helped this NIC score the best overall performance in our application-based performance tests. Similarly, the EtherLink III's ease-of-use and features scores were both among the highest of the NICs we tested. Installation is a breeze, thanks to a menu-driven configuration and diagnostic utility. The AutoLink software automatically configures the adapter and downloads the NetWare DOS client files from the server—or loads the standard DOS client files if no server is found. The card uses parallel tasking, a technique that breaks down network-adapter tasks into steps that are performed simultaneously to improve performance. The adapter's driver software automatically adjusts the timing of operations in overlapped task pipelines. Twisted-pair and thick-coaxial cable connectors are standard. The EtherLink's documentation stands out for its clarity and comprehensiveness. It comes with a glossary, a detailed index, and numerous diagrams. Note: This card supports 3Com emulation, but not NE2000 or SMC/Western Digital emulation.

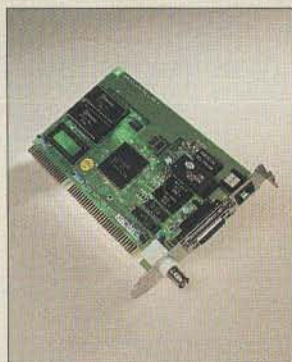


		PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	AUTOMATIC CONFIGURATION	NETWORK DRIVERS				
							NETWARE SERVER	ODI	IPX	NETBIOS	UNIX
BEST	3Com EtherLink III	\$143	1.07	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Alta Research EtherCombo-16+ T/C	\$99	1.00	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Intel EtherExpress Flash TP	\$139	0.99	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	SMC Elite16T Ultra	\$129	1.04	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Compex ENet 16 Combo/VP	\$99	1.01	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Allied Telesis AT-1500BT Plus	\$100	1.03	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Thomas-Conrad TC5143-T	\$98	1.00	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Racial InterLan EtherBlaster TP	\$159	1.02	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Budget-conscious?

#### LOW COST

#### Longshine LCS-8634L-TBA



The performance of this NIC's proprietary LSIC905R Ethernet controller is comparable to that of most of the boards ranked for best overall. This combination board supports twisted-pair, thick-coaxial, and thin-coaxial cabling, and it automatically detects the connection type. All settings are automatically configured by software that detects available system resources. This NIC supports NE2000 and SMC/Western Digital emulation, but not 3Com emulation.

Also noteworthy is the \$45 Elisa ETI-LAN002TLC, which offers essentially the same performance as the top-ranked Longshine LCS-8634L-TBA. It provides twisted-pair, AUI (attachment unit interface), and BNC connectors; supports NE2000 emulation; and is backed by a 5-year warranty. We ranked it fourth, however, because it doesn't offer automatic configuration, and its documentation is sparse and doesn't present clear setup instructions.

		PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	AUTOMATIC CONFIGURATION	NETWORK DRIVERS				
							NETWARE SERVER	ODI	IPX	NETBIOS	UNIX
BEST	Longshine LCS-8634L-TBA	\$79	1.01	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	CeLAN Technology E2000C	\$89	1.01	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Kingston EtherX 2000 Plus	\$89	0.97	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Elisa Technology ETI-LAN002TLC	\$45	1.00	▲▲	▲▲▲▲		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Lancast 4116 Combo Card	\$79	1.00	▲▲	▲▲▲▲		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	SVEC FD04901	\$69	0.99	▲▲	▲▲▲		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



# How We Tested

Each of the three types of network adapters that we tested had to supply UTP (unshielded twisted-pair) connectors (some also included BNC and AUI connectors) and directly support Novell NetWare 386 version 3.11.

Our NIC suite consisted of 18 data transfer tests that simulated a variety of network-usage patterns and load conditions. We also evaluated the design of each product, its drivers, and its documentation to determine our rankings.

## PERFORMANCE

Our test-bed server was a Compaq Deskpro 66/M (see the illustration). The server's and NetFlex controller's memory creates a large buffer to minimize the server's effects on client/server performance. We designed all tests so that there was a minimum of disk usage on the server, since frequent disk access could lower throughput and mask the performance of the adapter being tested. Additional test equipment included a diskless 286-based workstation with 1 MB of memory, to generate network traffic, and a DynaStar MiniHub.

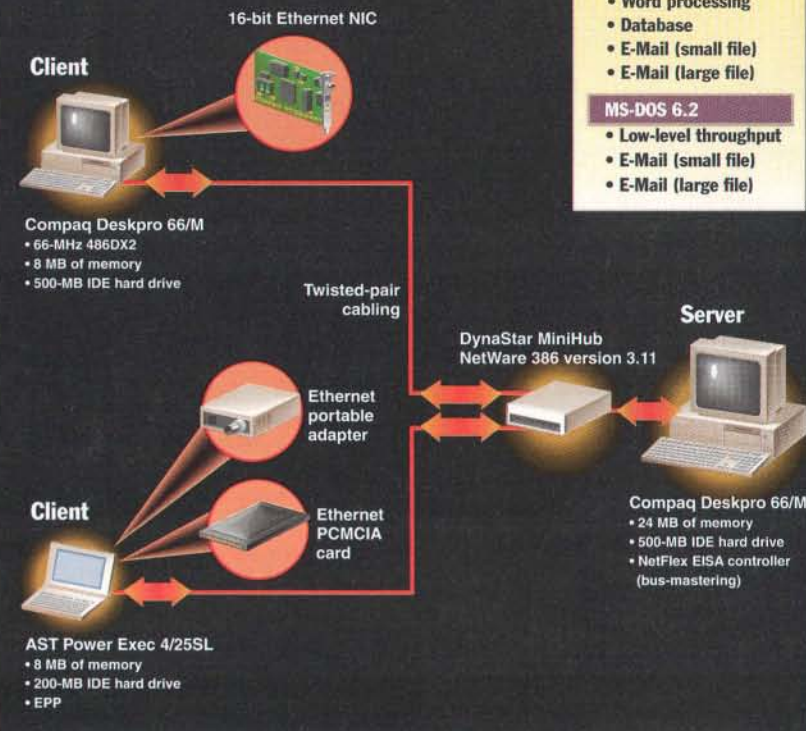
We used NetWare 386 version 3.11 drivers supplied by each network-hardware vendor. We also used monolithic drivers for the 16-bit NICs if they were provided. We tested PCMCIA cards and portable adapters with ODI (Open Data-Link Interface) drivers, which reflects common usage. We tested the portable adapters in unidirectional mode and in the fastest mode that each one supported (i.e., bidirectional or EPP).

## APPLICATION TESTS

We created the spreadsheet test by replicating the file-system access of Microsoft Excel 4.0. Each call, including the file, location in the file, and size of the operation, was re-created in detail for the reading and writing of small (20 KB) and large (100 KB) spreadsheets. We created the word processing test in a similar fashion by replicating the file-system operations of WordPerfect for Windows 5.1.

We designed two tests using cc:Mail for Windows. Each is an actual cc:Mail application, which sends a message with

## Test-Bed Hardware and Software



an attached file to a specified user. One test attaches a small representative text file, while the other attaches a larger spreadsheet. Two similar tests run on DOS. The last Windows test was an application that reads and writes an indexed database.

Once we compiled our transaction-per-minute data, we computed a speed index relative to the performance of the 16-bit ISA-based National Semiconductor InfoMover NE2000plus.

The performance of the 16-bit ISA adapters cannot be directly compared to that of the PCMCIA and portable adapters because they are tested on different client workstations. Also, the NIC scores presented here aren't directly comparable to those from the August 1993 Lab Report because we used a different client workstation in our test-bed. This Lab Report also presents speed in a simplified index format rather than in transactions per minute.

## USABILITY

We awarded points to products according to the number of features that they provided from our list of essential

features (see the text box "Hassle-Free NICs" on page 248). The portable adapters that received the highest features scores offered both bidirectional and EPP support, the ability to draw power from an external mouse or keyboard port, and a parallel port pass-through that enables you to simultaneously attach a printer and a NIC.

We assessed three areas for our ease-of-use ratings: configuration of the adapter, installation of the network drivers, and quality of the technical manual.

## Contributors

**Alan Joch**, Senior Editor/BYTE, coordinates the combined testing between the BYTE Lab and NSTL.

**Siva Kumar**, Technical Analyst/NSTL, specializes in hardware and network-operating-systems testing.

**Anthony J. Lennon**, Project Manager/NSTL, evaluates servers and network hardware, as well as portable systems and peripherals.

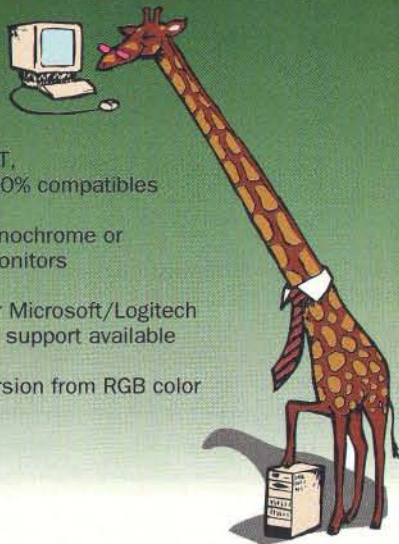
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- PS/2 style or Microsoft/Logitech serial mouse support available
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## PC-COMPANION *Plus*™

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- Combine monochrome and color VGA monitors
- Mouse support available at both local and remote workstations
- Switch selectable privacy mode



## Announcing Macintosh Support!

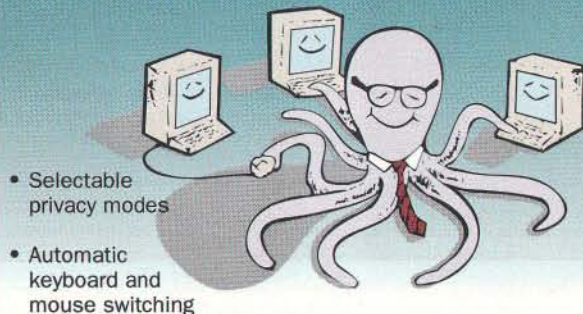
Open up a new world of applications for your Macintosh! The new Mediator™ for Macintosh allows you to connect any of these PS/2 compatible Cybex products or PS/2 peripherals to your Macintosh computer.



## PC-EXPANDER *Plus*™

Add up to 7 keyboards, monitors and mice to your PC up to 250 feet away!

- Supports PC/AT, PS/2 and 100% compatibles
- Microsoft and Logitech serial mouse support available at all workstations

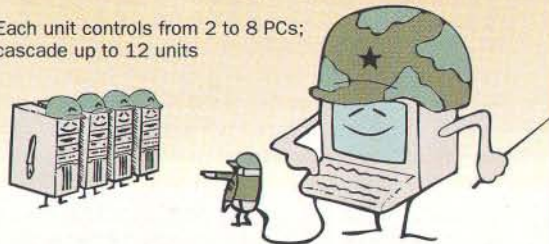


- Selectable privacy modes
- Automatic keyboard and mouse switching

## AutoBoot Commander™

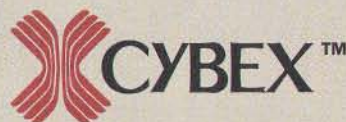
Control up to 96 file servers with just 1 keyboard, monitor and mouse!

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Circle 82 on Inquiry Card (RESELLERS: 83).



## THE BEST

## PCMCIA CARDS

**P**CMCIA support by portable computers is becoming universal. For example, in our March Lab Report (see "46 Powerful Portables"), 83 percent of the 486-based notebooks and subnotebooks we reviewed contained at least one PCMCIA slot. In addition, internal and external PCMCIA-card readers are also available for desktop systems.

The cards that we tested here conform to the PCMCIA release 2.01 Type II standard and to the IEEE 802.3 Ethernet standard; they conform to the standard dimensions of 2.16 by 1.35 by 1.3 inches. The cards are all software-configurable and draw their power from the client system, so they do not use external AC adapters.

In the mobile market, these cards compete directly against parallel-port Ethernet adapters. The average price for a PCMCIA Ethernet adapter is \$257, which is also the average price for a portable Ethernet adapter with EPP support. In our overall tests, the PCMCIA adapters outperformed the portable adapters in EPP mode by an average of 11 percent.

However, we found that the performance advantage of PCMCIA adapters was somewhat application-dependent. For instance, they outperformed the parallel-port adapters by about 15 percent in our spreadsheet benchmarks but posted only a 4 percent advantage in the cc:Mail for Windows tests, which tend to be more processor-intensive.

We saw less than a 7 percent difference between the fastest and the slowest PCMCIA adapters (the 3Com EtherLink III PCMCIA and Xircom's CreditCard Ethernet Adapter, respectively). Consequently, ease of configuration and features largely determined our overall rankings.

These PCMCIA adapters typically come with MAMs (media-access modules), which connect the cards to the physical network. The Boca, CNet, 3Com, and Xircom adapters we tested do not require external modules for 10Base-T connections because they can plug directly into an Ethernet hub. The Accton Ethernet PCMCIA Card's MAM comes with both 10Base-T and 10Base-2 connectors, and it automatically identifies the proper cable type.

Status lights can be very useful in diagnosing network problems. Typically LEDs, they provide link-status information and show whether data is being transmitted over the wire. All but two of the PCMCIA adapters in this review have at least two LEDs (either on the MAM or on the card itself) for showing both link-status information and whether data is being transmitted over the wire. The exceptions are 3Com's EtherLink III PCMCIA, which has only one LED, and the Boca PCMCIA 10Base-T Ethernet Adapter, which does

## UNIVERSAL C&amp;S

Most PCMCIA Ethernet card vendors provide their own C&S software with their adapter or include enabler drivers that let the card function in the absence of C&S. The problem with using enabler drivers is that they are typically designed by the vendor to get its particular PCMCIA card to function, which is of little help if you want to install multiple PCMCIA adapters. Some vendors, including CNet, simply refer you to your system vendor for C&S software.

Versa Technology has developed a third-party PCMCIA driver—CCMSTR.SYS version 2.06—that provides C&S for systems that lack these resources. The driver will automatically assign the next available memory and IRQ setting for Ethernet adapters when default settings conflict. This functionality is not available with token-ring NICs; their default settings must be changed via setup software. An advantage of the driver is that it requires only 24 KB of memory (versus the 53 KB required for typical C&S drivers).

CCMSTR.SYS loads into memory when you boot the host system. The driver supports PCMCIA's hot-removal and insertion feature. However, the driver does not support the hot removal of a card after Novell NetWare network drivers have been loaded. A pop-up window displays the type of PCMCIA card present, its IRQ level, and I/O and memory addresses.

We tested the CCMSTR.SYS driver on the CNet CN10BT and the Xircom CreditCard Ethernet Adapter, and it experienced no problems.

Versa Technology is planning to bundle the CCMSTR.SYS driver with a desktop card reader that is now under development. The primary market for the driver is system vendors and OEMs, but a BBS from which to download the driver will be available. The driver supports PCMCIA versions 1.0 through 2.1, and Versa Technology can supply a list of PCMCIA devices that have been successfully tested with its driver. Contact the company at (714) 533-6668.

not contain any status lights. However, neither model was hampered by its design: Both received ease-of-use ratings of excellent.

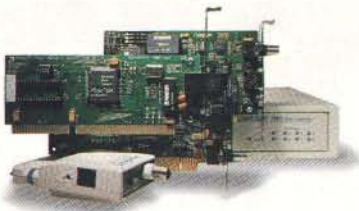
Whether or not C&S (Card and Socket Services) is present on a client system largely determines how easy a PCMCIA adapter is to use and install. Socket Services is hardware-dependent software that monitors each PCMCIA slot in a system to determine if a card is present. Card Services is a hardware-independent software management interface that controls communications between the PCMCIA card and the system. It makes system resources (e.g., IRQ [interrupt request], I/O port, and base-memory address) available to the adapter and dynamically allocates the resources when you load the NetWare DOS ODI (Open Data-Link Interface) driver.

The PCMCIA adapters from Ansel, Kingston, Microdyne, and National Semiconductor ship with their own C&S drivers (along with resource-table management software). The Boca PCMCIA 10Base-T Ethernet Adapter comes with its own C&S software, while the Black Box PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter 10BT ships with a device driver that automatically



### Token Ring.

*TokenRx.* A line of Token Ring network adapters and multi-station access units that feature on-site support by IBM's own Customer Engineers. The adapter cards feature 100% IBM driver compatibility, the IBM designed TROPIC chip and a retail price of less than \$400.



### Ethernet.

Our EibeRx family of ISA and EISA Ethernet network interface cards, dual interface pocket adapters, concentrators and transceivers provide solutions for a wide range of Ethernet connectivity needs. With uncompromised reliability and compatibility plus value pricing, EibeRx is the ideal Ethernet choice.

### PCMCIA Ethernet Cards.

Combining industry leading performance with a retail price of less than \$200, EibeRx PCMCIA cards are setting new standards for portable connectivity.



They are available in both 10Base-T and 10Base2 versions, support the widest range of Type II compliant notebook,

laptop and desktop systems and are compatible with all popular network operating systems.



OUR LARGE STRIDES IN MEMORY  
HAVE LED US INTO NETWORKING.

### Certified Compatibility.



Kingston networking products are certified compatible with Novell Netware, Microsoft Windows for Workgroups and LANManager, Artisoft LANtastic and support every other popular network operating system including IBM



OS/2 Extended Edition and Banyan VINES.



### Kingston Reliability.

Network users enjoy the same reliability customers have come to expect from Kingston memory and processor upgrades. Every product is individually tested prior to shipping, supported by free comprehensive technical assistance and is backed by a five-year warranty.

### More Information.

For more information on the Kingston line of networking products, contact your nearby Kingston dealer or call (800) 435-2620, (714) 435-2600 or fax (714) 435-2699. In Canada: Dynatech, Ltd. (416) 636-3000 or in

**[800]**

Mexico: MPS Mayorista 325-09-93 or Ingram Dicom 328-11-11.



THE INSIDE NAME IN UPGRADES

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# At \$345 it doesn't pay to buy dumb.



## New Complex TP3000 manageable 6-port hub.

Dumb hubs are, well, pretty dumb. But intelligent hubs cost too much. Now there's an alternative. New Complex TP3000™ modular, manageable 6-port hub system.

At \$345 it's a pretty smart solution for a dumb price.

Stack the TP3000 in groups of four practically indefinitely. Any two



TP3000 hubs stack in groups of four.

TP3000s may be connected for 19" rack mounting – all hardware is included. And here's the really smart part. Add the IN3000™ external intelligent module and you get all the hardware for SNMP and HMI hub management of up to 28 ports for only \$745. When you figure the math, you're getting an upgradeable hub at under \$50/port

and a fully managed system for less than \$76/port.

Basically, with a TP3000 system a network can start small and then grow indefinitely. Two ports at the back of the compact unit let you daisy chain the hub. Six RJ45 connectors and status LEDs are



located on the front. One coax connector allows you to easily connect 10 Base T workstations to existing coax networks. Unlike other hubs, the TP3000 doesn't use data ports for expansion, so all ports are available for node connection.

The payoff? You can easily start with a minimum network, then



Add IN3000 for network management.

Circle 74 on Inquiry Card (RESELLERS: 75).



efficiently grow to a large fully managed network in low cost steps. So why buy dumb? With the Complex TP3000 and IN3000 hub system resellers and users

have still another smart way to out-connect the rest.

### U.S.A. Office

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(714) 630-7302 • Fax (714) 630-6521

### Singapore Office

Complex Systems Pte Ltd  
4 Kim Chaun Terrace, Singapore 1953  
(65) 288 8220 • Fax (65) 280 9947

### Germany Office

ReadyLINK Networktechnology GmbH  
Albert-Einstein-Strasse 42, 63322 Rödermark, Germany  
49 (0) 6074-98017 • Fax 49 (0) 6074-90668



*Out-connecting the rest*

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allocates system resources if C&S is present.

Compex, IBM, and Thomas-Conrad supply enabler software drivers for use with their PCMCIA adapters. An enabler is a device driver that resides in CONFIG.SYS or AUTOEXEC.BAT and accepts configuration parameters (e.g., IRQ, base I/O, and memory address). Enabler drivers can also take over if your system does not support C&S drivers provided by a peripherals vendor. But enablers can limit the functionality of the PCMCIA card. For instance, you must insert the adapter during driver initialization, and there is no card insertion/removal support after you have booted up the system. In addition, you can make changes to the adapter's default settings only in the NET.CFG file for NetWare DOS ODI workstations (or in the PROTOCOL.INI file for NDIS drivers).

The driver software that is included with the CLI IC-Card T and the Addtron EP-200T PCMCIA cards automatically configures the adapters for you as long as C&S is present. The host automatically detects the available resources and then allocates them for use by the network adapter.

While we were testing C&S drivers and enablers or the Versa Technology driver (see the accompanying text box on page 252), we didn't encounter any compatibility problems with our testbed notebook. However, our tests didn't include running multiple PCMCIA cards in a single system, and incompatibilities can possibly arise when you are using cards with different drivers.

## BYTE BEST

## PCMCIA CARDS

### For problem-free PCMCIA installation...

#### BEST OVERALL

#### 3Com EtherLink III PCMCIA



This card, which uses a proprietary controller, scored the best overall performance in our benchmarks. It comes with BNC and twisted-pair couplers that can be inserted only in their proper orientation.

The EtherLink III PCMCIA received an ease-of-use rating of excellent thanks to its clear and comprehensive documentation and an installation program that automatically configures the card and loads the files necessary for it to function as a NetWare DOS ODI client. The EtherLink III is not designed to communicate with Card Services; its driver directly programs the PCMCIA controller in the client to configure the PCMCIA card. (To avoid conflicts, 3Com recommends that C&S not be installed unless it's required by another PCMCIA adapter.)

Also worth noting are the first and second runners-up from Thomas-Conrad and National Semiconductor. Each sells for a price near that of the 3Com adapter and offers performance that's a negligible 3 percent slower than that of the leader. The second-place Thomas-Conrad card ships with an enabler software driver. The National Semiconductor adapter offers a C&S software driver.



		PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	NETWORK DRIVERS				
						NETWARE SERVER	ODI	IPX	NETBIOS	UNIX
BEST	3Com EtherLink III PCMCIA	\$225	0.60	★★★★	★★★★		✓		✓	
RUNNER-UP	Thomas-Conrad TC5041-T	\$230	0.58	★★★★	★★★★		✓			✓
RUNNER-UP	National Semiconductor InfoMover NE4100	\$213	0.58	★★★★	★★★★		✓	✓		
RUNNER-UP	Xircom CreditCard Ethernet Adapter	\$299	0.56	★★★★	★★★★		✓		✓	
RUNNER-UP	Alta Research EtherMCIA UTP	\$299	0.58	★★★★	★★★★	✓	✓		✓	
RUNNER-UP	Accton Ethernet PCMCIA Card	\$199	0.57	★★★★	★★★★	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Microdyne NE4000T	\$249	0.58	★★★★	★★★★		✓			
RUNNER-UP	Kingston EtherX PCMCIA Adapter	\$179	0.58	★★★★	★★		✓			
RUNNER-UP	CLI IC-Card T	\$395	0.57	★★★★	★★	✓	✓		✓	
RUNNER-UP	IBM Credit Card Adapter	\$225	0.58	★★	★★		✓	✓	✓	

### Is \$200 your limit?

#### LOW COST

#### Accton Ethernet PCMCIA Card



This under-\$200 card provides overall performance that's on a par with that of PCMCIA adapters that cost \$100 more. The adapter's media coupler includes both 10Base-T and 10Base-2 connectors. The card automatically detects the type of wiring in use, and an enabler program automatically loads in the system's configuration to allow the card to function in computers that do not include C&S. An installation utility helps you select hardware settings and copies the appropriate network drivers to a selected subdirectory. The adapter's software also creates a batch file that logs the user on to the network as a NetWare ODI client. High-quality documentation adds to the ease of installing and configuring the adapter.

Kingston's EtherX PCMCIA Adapter offers a slightly lower price and fractionally better performance than the Accton Ethernet PCMCIA Card. However, we found its standard features to be inferior, especially its selection of network drivers.

		PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	NETWORK DRIVERS				
						NETWARE SERVER	ODI	IPX	NETBIOS	UNIX
BEST	Accton Ethernet PCMCIA Card	\$199	0.57	★★★★	★★★★	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUNNER-UP	Kingston EtherX PCMCIA Adapter	\$179	0.58	★★★★	★★		✓			
RUNNER-UP	Boca PCMCIA 10Base-T	\$195	0.57	★★★★	★★		✓			



#### KEY

Poor ▲ Fair ▲▲  
 Good ▲▲▲ Excellent ▲▲▲▲  
 Yes = ✓





# ADVERTISING WORKS



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Circle 385 on Inquiry Card.



**When you can't sacrifice your printer port...**

## BEST OVERALL

### Compex Para Port-E



This fast adapter uses a National Semiconductor Ethernet controller and comes with twisted-pair and BNC connectors. The Para Port-E supports standard, bidirectional, and EPP parallel ports, and it draws power from the system's keyboard connector (an external power adapter is available as a \$70 option).

This and the Longshine LCS-8834P-M (see the low-cost winners, below) are the only adapters that provide parallel pass-through ports, which let you attach a printer along with the portable adapter. The Para Port-E comes with a Novell NetWare ODI driver that automatically detects which parallel port is being used and sets the adapter to the highest performance mode.



Portable adapters quickly connect via the parallel port to portable and desktop computers, which may not have an available expansion slot for a standard adapter. Because you connect these adapters to the parallel port, there are no I/O or interrupt conflicts, and there's no need to reset jumpers or switches.

The portable adapters we tested automatically detect which parallel port of the system is being used, and many automatically configure the adapter to run in the highest performance mode. All but six of the portable adapters we looked at came with connectors for both twisted-pair and thin coaxial cable.

But the trade-off for the convenience of a portable adapter is slow performance. For example, the fastest one we tested, the CLI PE-EPPct, has throughput similar to that of an 8-bit ISA NIC,

even when using an EPP.

Unidirectional parallel ports send 8 bits of data at a time, but they receive only 4 bits of data at a time. Bidirectional parallel ports send and receive 8 bits of data at a time,

which can improve performance by as much as 50 percent over that of unidirectional ports. EPPs can approximate the performance of a standard 8-bit internal network adapter. For EPP mode to function, it must be supported by both the system and the portable adapter.

KEY	
Poor ▲	Fair ▲▲
Good ▲▲▲	Excellent ▲▲▲▲
Yes = ✓	

		PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	SUPPORTS EPP	PARALLEL PASS-THROUGH	WARRANTY (YEARS)	STATUS LIGHTS
BEST	Compex Para Port-E	\$209	0.53	▲▲	▲▲▲▲	✓	✓	5	4
RUNNER-UP	CLI PE-EPPct	\$199	0.54	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	✓		5	3
RUNNER-UP	Xircom Pocket Ethernet Adapter III	\$349	0.49	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		5	2
RUNNER-UP	GVC Technologies PE-002BT	\$229	0.52	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		5	6
RUNNER-UP	Kingston Dual Interface Ethernet Adapter	\$245	0.52	▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		5	6
RUNNER-UP	SMC ElitePort Combo	\$299	0.53	▲▲▲	▲▲	✓		5	4
RUNNER-UP	DEC Pocket Ethernet Adapter	\$299	0.52	▲▲	▲▲	✓		1	2
RUNNER-UP	Lancast 4107 Pocket Ethernet Adapter EPP	\$295	0.49	▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		3	6

## Are speed and price important?

## LOW COST

### CLI PE-EPPct



This adapter's overall performance is by far the fastest in the under-\$200 class, and it is second to no other adapter we tested at any price. It uses a Myson Ethernet controller and includes twisted-pair and BNC connectors. Powered by an external AC adapter, the PE-EPPct supports standard, bidirectional, and EPP parallel ports and provides automatic configuration. LEDs show power/link, reception, transmission, collision, and jabber.

		PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	SUPPORTS EPP	PARALLEL PASS-THROUGH	WARRANTY (YEARS)	STATUS LIGHTS
BEST	CLI PE-EPPct	\$199	0.54	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	✓		5	3
RUNNER-UP	Longshine LCS-8834P-M	\$189	0.36	▲▲▲	▲▲		✓	1	3
RUNNER-UP	SVEC FD100	\$129	0.32	▲▲	▲▲			5	3

## For the best unidirectional performance...

## STANDARD MODE

### Xircom Pocket Ethernet Adapter III



A compact unit measuring roughly the size of a business card, this adapter provides above-average unidirectional performance and is among the easiest to use, thanks to a rubber grip that makes the unit a breeze to attach and remove from the parallel port. The adapter draws power from PS/2-style mouse ports, and an external AC adapter is included. You must install a driver to use the Pocket Ethernet Adapter III in EPP mode. The excellent documentation stands out for its clarity.

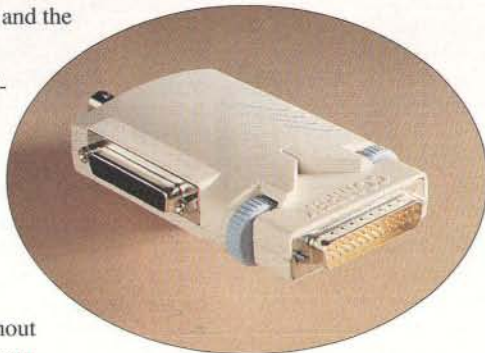
		PRICE	SPEED INDEX	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	SUPPORTS EPP	PARALLEL PASS-THROUGH	WARRANTY (YEARS)	STATUS LIGHTS
BEST	Xircom Pocket Ethernet Adapter III	\$349	0.33	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		5	2
RUNNER-UP	CLI PE-EPPct	\$199	0.35	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	✓		5	3
RUNNER-UP	Kingston Dual Interface Ethernet Adapter	\$245	0.34	▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		5	6
RUNNER-UP	GVC Technologies PE-002BT	\$229	0.31	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		5	6
RUNNER-UP	Longshine LCS-8834P-M	\$189	0.33	▲▲▲	▲▲		✓	1	3
RUNNER-UP	SVEC FD100	\$129	0.32	▲▲	▲▲			5	3
RUNNER-UP	Lancast 4107 Pocket Ethernet Adapter EPP	\$295	0.31	▲▲	▲▲▲	✓		3	6

<sup>1</sup> Using unidirectional parallel ports.



# HONORABLE MENTIONS

**You can attach a printer cable** to the parallel pass-through ports of the Compex Para Port-E and the Longshine LCS-8834P-M. This allows you to install a portable network adapter without losing the ability to print through the parallel port.



**The Accton Ethernet PCMCIA Card's coupler** comes with both 10Base-T and 10Base-2 connectors and still manages to be compact and light; the type of cabling used is auto-selectable. The 3Com EtherLink III offers a similarly flexible design. It comes with two types of cables, one with a BNC connector and the other with a twisted-pair connector.



**The Black Box Modular Parallel Adapter** features modular media units, so you don't need to purchase a new adapter if there is a media change. You simply attach the modular media unit that matches the cabling system, and the adapter reattaches to the network.



## Dubious Achievements

**The GVC NIC-2003BT is software-configurable** only with respect to its emulation mode (NE2000 or Western Digital 8013EBT). All other settings, including the media type, IRQ, base I/O, and interrupt, are configured through jumper settings, which can be tedious to change. This also requires that you open up your system to access the card. These settings can be altered via software, without powering down the host, on all other 16-bit ISA adapters.



**The design of the Danpex EN-6000BT portable adapter**

is subpar. Your fingers tend to slip off the wheels that are used to tighten its screws. Its RJ-45 and BNC connectors are located on the back of the unit, along with the plug for the unit's external AC adapter. Two LEDs are sandwiched between the connectors, which makes them

difficult to monitor.



# RAIDION

FAULT - TOLERANT DISK ARRAYS

**RAIDION®** LT and LS Series disk array subsystems are designed for use with either Novell NetWare 3.1x/4.x or IBM OS/2.

## Easy Upgrade.

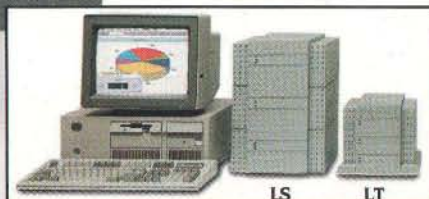
RAIDION, configured with 2 modules, provides mirrored fault tolerance up to 3 GB. Adding just one more module and installing RAIDWARE™, doubles user capacity and upgrades the array to RAID 5. Each array can be expanded to 32 modules and 93 GB.

## Exceptional Warranty.

There is a full 5 year warranty on all Micropolis high-capacity disk drives. Other RAIDION components carry a 3 year warranty.

**Hot-Swap** and Hot Replacement features allow RAIDION to be serviced while your network remains up and running. In addition, RAIDION can be configured with an On-Line Spare, which activates automatically upon drive failure ensuring continuous fault-tolerant operation.

**Award Winning.** In a benchmark comparison of arrays, Corporate Computing said: "Raidion was our overall winner with an impressive combination of high performance, low cost, and unparalleled expandability." May 1993. RAIDION was also named LAN Magazine's Disk Array Product of the Year for 1994.



MODULE #	CAPACITY	DRIVE FORM
LM 1050	1,050 MB	LT 3.5-inch
LM 1760	1,760 MB	LT 3.5-inch
RM 2100	2,100 MB	LS 5.25-inch
RM 3020	3,020 MB	LS 5.25-inch

Other add-on module capacities available.

**Economical.** An LT Series three module 2 GB array is approximately \$6,500. An LS Series Raid 5 array with a capacity of 6 GB lists for under \$13,000. That's about \$2.00 per MB. RAIDION's low price makes fault tolerance affordable for any size network. **For the name of the reseller nearest you, call toll free 1-800-395-3748.**



# MICROPOLIS®

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Circle 108 on Inquiry Card.



## ROLL CALL OF ETHERNET ADAPTERS

VENDOR	MODEL	PRICE	SPEED INDEX <sup>1</sup>	EASE OF USE	FEATURES	CONTROLLER VENDOR
Addtron Technology	AE-200JL-N	\$95	1.00	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	Winbond
Allied Telesis, Inc.	AT-1500BT Plus	\$100	1.03	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	AMD
Alta Research Corp.	EtherCombo-16+ T/C	\$99	1.00	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Anco Technology, Inc.	E-16CT	\$55	0.99	▲▲	▲▲	Anco
Ansel Communications	NS2000-3	\$149	0.99	▲▲	▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Arco Electronics	AC-9000S	\$150	1.01	▲▲	▲▲▲	SMC
Artisoft, Inc.	Node Runner/SI 2000/T	\$124	1.00	▲▲▲▲	▲	Artisoft
CeLAN Technology, Inc.	E2000C	\$89	1.01	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	Realtek
CLI, Inc.	Ether-16T	\$99	1.01	▲▲	▲▲	Myson
CNet Technology	CN888E	\$149	1.00	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Compex, Inc.	ENet 16 Combo/VP	\$99	1.01	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
CompuLAN Technology, Inc.	E650 Plus	\$99	0.99	▲▲▲	▲▲	UMC
Danpex Corp.	EN-2400P3	\$88	1.00	▲▲	▲▲	Winbond
Digital Equipment Corp.	EtherWorks 3 Turbo/TP	\$155	0.98	▲▲	▲▲▲	DEC
Elisa Technology	ETI-LAN002TLC	\$45	1.00	▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
GVC Technologies, Inc.	NIC-2003BT	\$109	1.00	▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Hewlett-Packard Co.	PC LAN Adapter NC/16 TP	\$119	1.02	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	AMD
HTI Networks	HT-NE 2000E3	\$109	0.99	▲▲	▲▲▲	Winbond
IBM Corp.	LAN Adapter for Ethernet TP	\$95	0.97	▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
Intel Corp.	EtherExpress Flash TP	\$139	0.99	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	Intel
Kingston Technology Corp.	EtherX 2000 Plus Triple Interface	\$89	0.97	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
Lancast	4116 Combo Card	\$79	1.00	▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Lannet, Inc.	LEC-45T/AT	\$269	1.01	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	SMC
Longshine Microsystem, Inc.	LCS-8634L-TBA	\$79	1.01	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	LSIC
Microdyne Corp.	NE2000T plus	\$97	0.99	▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
National Semiconductor	InfoMover NE2000plus	\$97	1.00	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Ocean Information Systems	Ethernet-2000+3	\$75	0.97	▲▲▲	▲▲	AMD
Racal InterLan, Inc.	EtherBlaster TP	\$159	1.02	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	AMD
Standard Microsystems Corp.	Elite16T Ultra	\$129	1.04	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	SMC
Sureman Computer Corp.	Surecom EP-301T	\$119	1.01	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	Surecom/Maxonics
SVEC Computer Corp.	FD0490I	\$69	0.99	▲▲	▲▲▲	UMC
Thomas-Conrad Corp.	TC5143-T	\$98	1.00	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
<b>3Com Corp.</b>	<b>EtherLink III</b>	<b>\$143</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>▲▲▲▲</b>	<b>▲▲▲▲</b>	<b>3Com</b>
Top Microsystems Corp.	TE-2015C	\$119	1.00	▲▲	▲▲▲	Winbond
Xinetron, Inc.	Xi-321TCA	\$79	1.01	▲▲	▲▲	RTC
Accton Technology Corp.	Ethernet PCMCIA Card	\$199	0.57	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	Accton
Addtron Technology	EP-200T	\$259	0.57	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
Alta Research Corp.	EtherMCIA UTP	\$299	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Ansel Communications	NP 6800-T	\$249	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
Black Box Corp.	PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter 10BT	\$349	0.57	▲▲▲	▲▲	Proprietary
Boca Research, Inc.	PCMCIA 10Base-T Ethernet Adapter	\$195	0.57	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	Fujitsu
CLI, Inc.	IC-Card T	\$395	0.57	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	Myson
CNet Technology	CN10BT	\$299	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
Compex, Inc.	ENet-MCIA	\$249	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
IBM Corp.	Credit Card Adapter for Ethernet	\$225	0.58	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Kingston Technology Corp.	EtherX PCMCIA Adapter	\$179	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
Microdyne Corp.	NE4000T	\$249	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
National Semiconductor	InfoMover NE4100	\$213	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Thomas-Conrad Corp.	TC5041-T	\$230	0.58	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
<b>3Com Corp.</b>	<b>EtherLink III PCMCIA</b>	<b>\$225</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>▲▲▲▲</b>	<b>▲▲▲▲</b>	<b>3Com</b>
Xircor, Inc.	CreditCard Ethernet Adapter	\$299	0.56	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	Fujitsu
Addtron Technology	EP-300T	\$159	0.23	▲▲▲	▲	National Semiconductor
Black Box Corp.	Modular Parallel Adapter W/SPC	\$325	0.33	▲▲	▲▲	National Semiconductor
CLI, Inc.	PE-EPPct	\$199	0.54	▲▲▲	▲▲▲▲	Myson
CNet Technology	CN60ET	\$249	0.37	▲	▲▲	Tamarack
<b>Compex, Inc.</b>	<b>Para Port-E</b>	<b>\$209</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>▲▲</b>	<b>▲▲▲▲</b>	<b>National Semiconductor</b>
Danpex Corp.	EN-6000BT	\$185	0.28	▲	▲▲	Realtek
Digital Equipment Corp.	Pocket Ethernet Adapter	\$299	0.52	▲▲	▲▲	DEC
GVC Technologies, Inc.	PE-002BT	\$229	0.52	▲▲▲	▲▲▲	SMC, Intel, Nat'l. Semi.
Kingston Technology Corp.	Dual Interface Ethernet Adapter	\$245	0.52	▲▲	▲▲▲	National Semiconductor
Lancast	4107 Pocket Ethernet Adapter EPP	\$295	0.49	▲▲	▲▲	Tamarack
Longshine Microsystem, Inc.	LCS-B834P-M	\$189	0.36	▲▲▲	▲▲	Realtek
Standard Microsystems Corp.	ElitePort Combo	\$299	0.53	▲▲▲	▲▲	SMC
Sureman Computer Corp.	Surecom EP-401	\$235	0.49	▲▲	▲▲	Tamarack
SVEC Computer Corp.	FD100	\$129	0.32	▲▲	▲▲	Realtek
Xircor, Inc.	Pocket Ethernet Adapter III	\$349	0.49	▲▲▲▲	▲▲▲	Fujitsu



**BYTE** Best. <sup>1</sup> Relative to the NE2000plus, which equals 1. Scores are not directly comparable among technology types.

Excellent ▲▲▲▲ Good ▲▲▲ Fair ▲▲ Poor ▲







# ROLL CALL OF ETHERNET ADAPTERS

16-BIT  
NICS

VENDOR	MODEL	NETWORK DRIVERS							LOOPBACK
		NETWARE SERVER	ODI	IPX	NETWARE NT CLIENT	NETBIOS	UNIX	NDIS	
Addtron Technology	AE-200JL-N	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Allied Telesis, Inc.	AT-1500BT Plus	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alta Research Corp.	EtherCombo-16+ T/C	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Anco Technology, Inc.	E-16CT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ansel Communications	NS2000-3	✓	✓					✓	✓
Arco Electronics	AC-9000S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Artisoft, Inc.	Node Runner/SI 2000/T		✓			✓		✓	✓
CeLAN Technology, Inc.	E2000C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CLI, Inc.	Ether-16T	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CNet Technology	CN888E	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Compex, Inc.	ENet 16 Combo/VP	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
CompuLAN Technology, Inc.	E650 Plus	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Danpex Corp.	EN-2400P3	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Digital Equipment Corp.	EtherWorks 3 Turbo/TP	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Elisa Technology	ETI-LAN002TLC	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
GVC Technologies, Inc.	NIC-2003BT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hewlett-Packard Co.	PC LAN Adapter NC/16 TP	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
HTI Networks	HT-NE 2000E3	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
IBM Corp.	LAN Adapter for Ethernet TP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Intel Corp.	EtherExpress Flash TP	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Kingston Technology Corp.	EtheRx 2000 Plus Triple Interface	✓	✓					✓	✓
Lancast	4116 Combo Card	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Lannet, Inc.	LEC-45T/AT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Longshine Microsystem, Inc.	LCS-8634L-TBA	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Microdyne Corp.	NE2000T plus	✓	✓					✓	✓
National Semiconductor	InfoMover NE2000plus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ocean Information Systems	Ethernet-2000+3	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Racal InterLan, Inc.	EtherBlaster TP	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Standard Microsystems Corp.	Elite16T Ultra	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sureman Computer Corp.	Surecom EP-301T	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
SVEC Computer Corp.	FD0490I	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Thomas-Conrad Corp.	TC5143-T	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>3Com Corp.</b>	<b>EtherLink III</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Top Microsystems Corp.	TE-2015C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xinetron, Inc.	XI-321TCA	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓

PCMCIA  
CARDS

Accton Technology Corp.	Ethernet PCMCIA Card	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Addtron Technology	EP-200T	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Alta Research Corp.	EtherMCIA UTP		✓			✓		✓	✓
Ansel Communications	NP 6800-T		✓					✓	✓
Black Box Corp.	PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter 10BT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Boca Research, Inc.	PCMCIA 10Base-T Ethernet Adapter		✓					✓	✓
CLI, Inc.	IC-Card T	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
CNet Technology	CN10BT		✓					✓	✓
Compex, Inc.	ENet-MCIA		✓					✓	✓
IBM Corp.	Credit Card Adapter for Ethernet		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Kingston Technology Corp.	EtheRx PCMCIA Adapter		✓					✓	✓
Microdyne Corp.	NE4000T		✓					✓	✓
National Semiconductor	InfoMover NE4100		✓	✓				✓	✓
Thomas-Conrad Corp.	TC5041-T		✓				✓	✓	✓
<b>3Com Corp.</b>	<b>EtherLink III PCMCIA</b>		✓			✓		✓	✓
Xircom, Inc.	CreditCard Ethernet Adapter		✓			✓		✓	✓

PORTABLE  
ADAPTERS

Addtron Technology	EP-300T	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Black Box Corp.	Modular Parallel Adapter W/SPC		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
CLI, Inc.	PE-EPPct	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
CNet Technology	CN60ET		✓	✓				✓	✓
<b>Compex, Inc.</b>	<b>Para Port-E</b>	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Danpex Corp.	EN-6000BT		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Digital Equipment Corp.	Pocket Ethernet Adapter		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GVC Technologies, Inc.	PE-002BT		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Kingston Technology Corp.	Dual Interface Ethernet Adapter		✓					✓	✓
Lancast	4107 Pocket Ethernet Adapter EPP		✓	✓				✓	✓
Longshine Microsystem, Inc.	LCS-8834P-M		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Standard Microsystems Corp.	ElitePort Combo		✓	✓				✓	✓
Sureman Computer Corp.	Surecom EP-401		✓	✓				✓	✓
SVEC Computer Corp.	FD100		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Xircom, Inc.	Pocket Ethernet Adapter III		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

**BYTE** = BYTE Best. ✓ = yes.



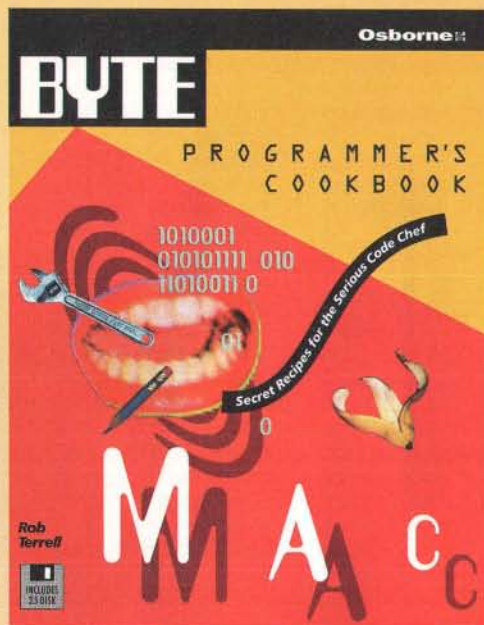
DIAGNOSTICS			TRANSMIT- BUFFER SIZE (KB)	INTERRUPTS	STATUS LIGHTS	WARRANTY (YEARS)	PHONE	TOLL-FREE PHONE	INQUIRY NUMBER
INTERSTATION TRANSMISSION	FRAME OVERRUNS	COLLISIONS							
			16	8	2	5	(510) 770-0120	(800) 998-4638	1105
			16	8	4	Lifetime	(415) 964-2771	(800) 424-4284	1106
✓		✓	16	9	4	Lifetime	(305) 428-8535	(800) 423-8535	1107
✓			16	8	1	2	(714) 992-9000	(800) 545-2626	1108
			3	8	2	5	(408) 452-5041	(800) 998-2675	1109
✓	✓	✓	4	4	3	5	(305) 925-2688	(800) 458-1666	1110
✓	✓	✓	32	5	1	5	(602) 670-7400	(800) 846-9726	1111
✓			16	8	2	Lifetime	(408) 434-6888	(800) 272-3526	1112
✓	✓	✓	8	7	3	5	(714) 572-8000	(800) 727-5250	1113
			16	8	2	Lifetime	(408) 954-8000	(800) 486-2638	1114
			8	8	1	5	(714) 630-7302	(800) 279-8891	1115
✓		✓	16	9	2	5	(408) 432-8899	(800) 486-8810	1116
			16	7	2	5	(408) 437-7557	(800) 452-1551	1117
✓	✓	✓	128	4	2	1	(508) 486-6949	(800) 344-4825	1118
✓	✓	✓	16	8	2	5	(510) 651-5817	None	1119
✓	✓	✓	16	8	2	5	(201) 579-3630	(800) 289-4821	1121
✓			N/A <sup>a</sup>	8	2	Lifetime	None	(800) 533-1333	1122
			16	9	2	5	(408) 745-0100	None	1123
✓	✓		16	7	2	5	None	(800) 426-2255	1124
✓	✓	✓	12	7	2	Lifetime	(503) 629-7354	(800) 538-3373	1125
✓			16	8	2	5	(714) 435-2600	(800) 435-2620	1126
✓		✓	3	8	2	3	(603) 880-1833	(800) 752-2768	1127
✓			8	4	2	1	(714) 752-6638	(800) 435-7535	1128
			8	8	0	1	(310) 903-0899	None	1129
✓			16	8	2	Lifetime	(703) 739-0500	(800) 255-3967	1130
✓			8	8	1	Lifetime	(408) 721-5000	(800) 231-6072	1346
✓	✓	✓	32	7	3	1	(818) 339-8888	(800) 325-2496	1347
✓			0	8	1	Lifetime	(508) 263-9929	(800) 526-8255	1348
✓	✓		16	7	2	Lifetime	(516) 435-6000	(800) 762-4968	1349
			16	8	2	5	(818) 333-7730	None	1350
✓			16	7	4	5	(714) 756-2233	None	1351
✓	✓	✓	16	5	4	5	(512) 836-1935	(800) 332-8683	1352
✓	✓	✓	2	15	1	Lifetime	(408) 764-500	(800) 638-3266	1353
✓			1.5	7	1	5	(408) 980-9813	(800) 827-8721	1354
			16	8	2	3	(408) 727-5509	(800) 345-4415	1355
✓		✓	3	8	2	2	(408) 452-8900	(800) 926-9288	1356
			16	1	4	1	(510) 770-0120	(800) 998-4638	1357
✓		✓	16	9	2	5	(305) 428-8535	(800) 423-8535	1358
			3	7	2	5	(408) 452-5041	(800) 998-2675	1359
			64	Unlimited	4	1	(412) 746-5500	None	1360
			2	7	0	5	(407) 997-6227	None	1361
			8	Unlimited	4	5	(714) 572-8000	(800) 727-5250	1362
			64	8	2	Lifetime	(408) 954-8000	(800) 486-2638	1363
			8	8	2	2	(714) 630-7302	(800) 279-8891	1364
✓	✓		16	7	2	5	None	(800) 426-2255	1366
✓			16	8	2	5	(714) 435-2600	(800) 835-2545	1367
			16	8	2	Lifetime	(703) 739-0500	(800) 255-3967	1368
			3	Unlimited	2	Lifetime	(408) 721-5000	(800) 231-6072	1369
✓	✓	✓	16	8	2	5	(512) 836-1935	(800) 332-8683	1370
✓	✓	✓	2	8	1	Lifetime	(408) 764-500	(800) 638-3266	1371
			4	15	2	5	(818) 878-7600	(800) 874-7875	1372
			8	2	4	1	(510) 770-0120	(800) 998-4638	1373
			0	2	2	1	(412) 746-5500	None	1374
✓	✓	✓	8	2	3	5	(714) 572-8000	(800) 727-5250	1375
			8	2	2	Lifetime	(408) 954-8000	(800) 486-2638	1376
			8	2	4	5	(714) 630-7302	(800) 279-8891	1377
			64	2	2	2	(408) 437-7557	(800) 452-1551	1378
✓	✓	✓	128	0	2	1	(508) 486-6949	None	1379
✓			8	0	6	5	(201) 579-3630	(800) 289-4821	1381
✓		✓	32	2	6	5	(714) 435-2600	(800) 435-2620	1382
✓	✓	✓	3	2	6	3	(603) 880-1833	(800) 752-2768	1383
			4	2	3	1	(310) 903-0899	None	1384
			32	1	4	5	(516) 435-6000	(800) 762-4968	1385
			8	1	3	1	(818) 333-7730	None	1386
✓			32	2	3	5	(714) 756-2233	None	1387
			8	3	2	5	(818) 878-7600	(800) 874-7875	1388

<sup>a</sup> Uses driver for buffering from 3 KB to 24 KB.



# Secret Recipes

## FOR THE SERIOUS CODE CHEF



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# PowerPC 604 Weighs In

**Six execution units and dynamic branch prediction highlight IBM/Motorola's new processor**

**BOB RYAN AND TOM THOMPSON**

**W**ith the backing of parents IBM, Motorola, and Apple, the PowerPC architecture has the best chance of taking significant market share away from the 80x86. The appeal of the original PowerPC—the 601—was that it offered the performance of the original Pentium for the price of a 486. The latest PowerPC, the 604, raises the stakes by offering performance that is 50 percent better than the latest Pentium, the 100-MHz P54C.

Pricing hadn't been established at the time of this writing, but Russell Stanphill, codirector of the IBM/Motorola Somerset design facility, says that 604 pricing will maintain the price/performance advantage that the PowerPC in general enjoys over the 80x86. The P54C currently sells for \$995 per thousand and will likely be under \$900 by fall. Despite its higher performance, the 604 will have to beat this price significantly to make reasonably priced 604-based personal computers possible.

At 100 MHz and with 1 MB of secondary cache and a 66-MHz bus, 604 simulations provide 160 SPECint92 and 165 SPECfp92, easily eclipsing the 100 SPECint92 and 80 SPECfp92 of the P54C. The design team achieved this performance by incorporating six separate execution units into the processor, three more than the 601 and two more than the 603. In addition, the 604 employs dynamic branch prediction to keep the execution units filled with instructions, yet it retains full compatibility with the other PowerPC processors.

The 604 will sample in the third quarter of this year and ship in at least limited-volume quantities in the fourth quarter. You can expect to see systems from Apple and IBM based on the part late this year or early next year.

## Inside 604

With personal computers—as opposed to workstation-class machines—integer performance is everything, and the 604 microarchitecture betrays its PC leanings. Of its six execution pipelines, three are dedicated to integer functions. Two of the integer units handle single-cycle, register-to-register instructions, while the third is a more complex three-stage pipeline that handles integer multiplies and divides. The 604 is the first MPU (microprocessor unit) to offer three integer pipelines.

The other execution units in the 604 are an IEEE 754-compatible FPU, a load/store unit that moves data between registers and memory, and a branch unit that han-

dles changes in the flow of instructions into the processor. The execution units are fed instructions and data by separate 16-KB, four-way set-associative instruction and data caches, which in turn communicate off-chip through the bus interface unit.

The 604 fetches up to four instructions per cycle from the instruction cache. It deposits these into an eight-entry prefetch/decode buffer. The bottom four entries of this buffer decode the instructions—that is, they determine the resources that each instruction requires.

Once decoded, up to four instructions per cycle move to the dispatch buffer. Here, the dispatch logic assigns a rename buffer as the destination for any writes to a register that an instruction makes, and it reads the instruction's operands from architectural registers or previously assigned rename buffers. The 604 contains 12 rename buffers for the 32 GPRs (general-purpose registers), and eight for the 32 FPRs (floating-point registers). To handle all the register accesses required by the multiple execution units, the 604 provides eight integer, three floating-point, and one condition register read ports. The use of rename buffers keeps instructions that are executing speculatively from updating architectural registers.

The dispatch logic also assigns each instruction an entry in the 16-entry reorder buffer, which tracks the status of every instruction—including whether the instruction is executing speculatively—from dispatch to completion. Thus, the 604 can have no more than 16 instructions executing—speculatively or otherwise—at any one time. If the reorder buffer is full, dispatch stops until one or more entries become available.

## Dispatch and Execution

From the dispatch buffer, instructions move to the execution units—up to four per cycle, although no more than one per execution unit per cycle. Instructions are dispatched in program order, and no instruction can dispatch after a branch instruction in the same cycle.

Each execution unit is fronted with a two-stage reservation station to keep a stalled execution unit from blocking dispatch to other units. If the execution stage is busy, instructions wait here until the first stage is clear. They also wait here if any of their operands are not available.

## 604 FACTS

- 100-MHz processor clock
- 1/x, 2/3x, 1/2x, 1/3x bus clock
- 32-bit address bus
- 64-bit data bus
- 3.3 V
- Less than 10 W
- 3.6 million transistors
- 196-mm<sup>2</sup> die
- 0.5-micron 4-metal layer
- 304-pin CQFP
- Six execution units
- Split caches
  - physically indexed
  - physical tags
  - MESI cache coherency
  - 128-entry two-way TLBs
- Load/store queues

*continued*



A data-forwarding mechanism feeds the reservation stations, allowing operands to be made available to follow-on instructions before the instructions that produce them complete writeback. Note that if an instruction with all its operands available is dispatched to an idle execution unit whose reservation station is empty, the instruction issues immediately to the execution stage.

Instructions issue from the reservation stations to the individual execution units. With the branch, floating-point, and load/store units, instructions issue in order from the station to the unit. With the integer units, an instruction can issue out of order from the station to the unit. Thus, the 604 supports in-order dispatch; in-order issue within the branch, load/store, and floating-point units; out-of-order issue in the integer units; and out-of-order execution.

The 604 uses the reorder buffer to ensure that instructions complete in program order, thus ensuring the integrity of the architectural model. For example, if an instruction executing out of order causes an exception, the exception is noted in the reorder buffer and isn't handled until the instruction is retired from the buffer. Exceptions are always handled in program order.

## Instruction Reflow

Unlike the 601 and 603, the 604 uses dynamic branch prediction to minimize delay when the normal sequential flow of instructions is changed by a branch instruction. Dynamic branch prediction is more complex than the static kind, but it adapts better to the run-time environment, thus ensuring better predictions.

Branch-prediction logic makes educated guesses about the outcome of a branch and begins fetching instructions from the predicted branch address before the condition the branch is based on is even tested. A misprediction, of course, results in a delay, but correctly predicted branches can result in zero-delay branching—the nirvana of every CPU designer.

Both the 601 and 603 rely on a "hint" bit in the coding of branch instructions to determine the direction of a branch. The 604 ignores this bit. Instead, it contains a 512-entry, direct-mapped BHT (branch history table) that maps four branch-prediction states: strong taken, weak taken, weak not-taken, and strong not-taken. The predicted state for a particular branch instruction is set and modified based on the history of the instruction.

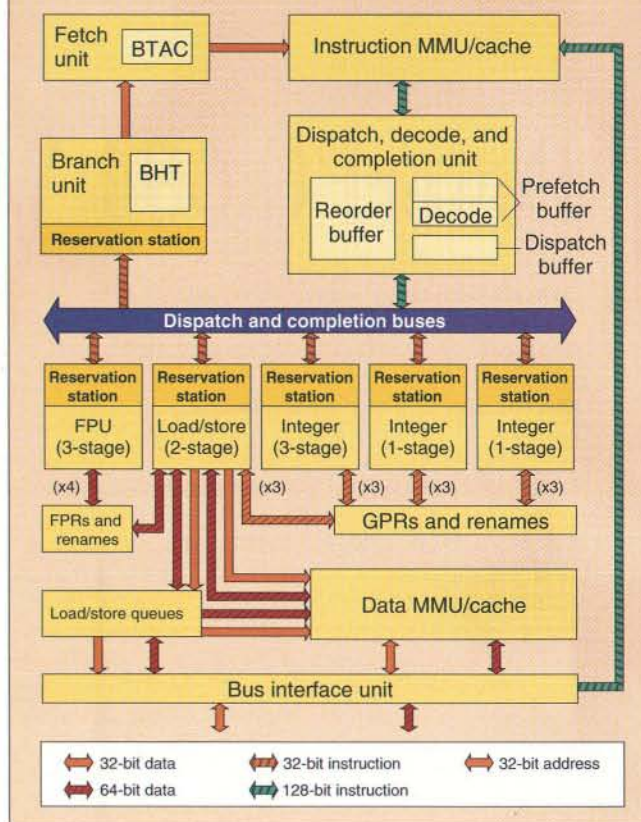
The BHT feeds the BTAC (branch target address cache) with both the address of a branch instruction and the target address of the branch. The BTAC—a fully associative, 64-entry cache—stores both the address and the target of previously executed branch instructions. During the fetch stage, this cache is accessed by the fetch logic. If the current fetch address—the address used to get the next instruction from the cache—matches an address in the BTAC, then the branch target address associated with the fetch address is used instead of the fetch address to fetch instructions from the cache. Talk about cutting out the middle man.

Instructions fetched and executed based on a branch prediction are considered speculative until the branch is resolved; that is, until it is known whether the branch prediction was accurate. No speculative instruction is permitted to update the architectural state. The 604 lets instructions execute speculatively through writeback, but only nonspeculative instructions can be retired by the completion unit.

## Instruction Finale

The 604 lets instructions execute out of order and execute with up to two levels of speculation, but it doesn't let such instructions affect the architectural state of the processor. In other words, such instructions cannot affect any user-visible registers or memory lo-

## The 604 Microarchitecture



cations. Registers and memory can be touched only by non-speculative instructions in program order. This rule is enforced by the completion unit. (The exceptions to this rule are the Counter and Link registers used by branch instructions. These employ shadow registers to back out of mispredicted branches.)

The completion unit uses the reorder buffer to retire instructions. It retires instructions in program order, up to four instructions per cycle. It won't retire an instruction that is labeled speculative, nor will it retire one that executed out of order unless all previous instructions have been retired. The completion unit knows the order of instructions because this information is supplied to the reorder buffer when the instruction is dispatched.

Likewise, the 604 has an internal mechanism to mark instructions executing speculatively and remove the marking when the speculative branch is resolved. Of course, if the branch is found to be mispredicted, the mechanism must be able to expunge the speculative instructions from the pipeline and the reorder buffer and to invalidate writes such instructions made to the rename buffers. Due to pending patent applications, the Somerset design team declined to give details of this internal tracking mechanism other than to characterize it as relatively straightforward.

In the future, you will see faster versions of the 604 as IBM and Motorola improve their processor technology. The 604 also gives strong indications of how the PowerPC 620—the workstation member of the PowerPC line due in the fall—will play out. The 620 will issue six instructions per cycle, at least two of which will undoubtedly be floating-point instructions. At present, however, the 604's integer performance is a perfect fit with the types of applications that dominate desktop computing. ■

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# Retrofitting OS/2 for SMP

**OS/2 can now exploit the current generation of 80x86-based symmetric multiprocessing hardware**

**MICHAEL S. KOGAN**

**A**lthough IBM's microkernel-based Workplace OS will support SMP (symmetric multiprocessing), IBM has also chosen to retrofit the existing OS/2 2.1 to support 80x86-based SMP platforms. The two systems are very different beasts. In Workplace OS, SMP arises naturally from the Mach foundation. In OS/2, SMP is a retrofit. Fortunately, the necessary techniques are well understood—many Unix kernels have undergone the same transformation. To enable OS/2 2.x for SMP, global system data must be partitioned on a per-processor basis and be restructured to support true concurrent execution of processes and threads. Algorithmic enhancements are needed in the areas of multitasking, memory management, synchronization, and interrupt management.

## OS/2 on a Single 80x86 Processor

UP (uniprocessor) OS/2 relies heavily on two assumptions that SMP threatens: that the kernel can't be preempted and that interrupts can be disabled. When a thread runs in user mode (at ring 3, the least-trusted 80x86 privilege level), it can be preempted; when it runs in kernel mode (at the most-trusted level, ring 0), it cannot. A thread requesting system service calls `EnterKMode` to save its context, switches to a kernel (ring 0) stack, and then enjoys full access to the resources of the system. Once in kernel mode, the thread must finish its job quickly and return to user mode, or block awaiting some event.

The first assumption is that threads are never preempted in kernel mode—if interrupted, execution resumes after interrupt service, even if a higher-priority thread becomes ready to run. So while a thread in kernel mode is interruptible, it is not preemptible.

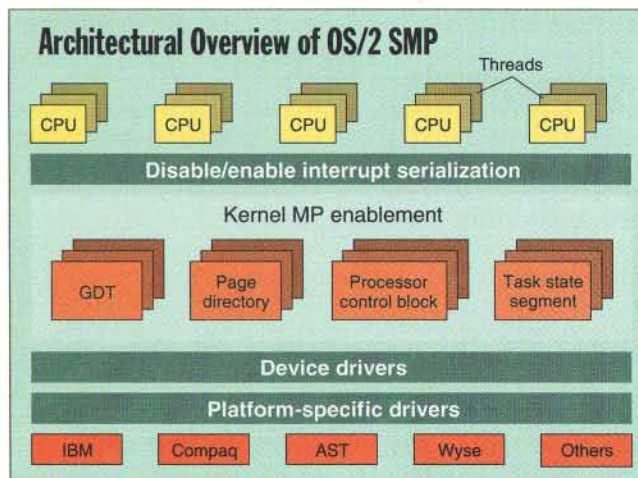
Hardware interrupts are processed in interrupt mode. When an interrupt occurs, the processor switches to ring 0, OS/2 switches to an interrupt stack, and the interrupt handler runs. If the interrupt occurred in user mode and a thread moves to the ready state, a reschedule will be forced by consecutive calls to `EnterKMode` and `ExitKMode`. If the interrupt occurred in kernel mode, no dispatch cycle occurs, and control is immediately returned to the interrupted thread.

The other assumption is that interrupts can be disabled using the CLI/STI (clear/set interrupt enable flag) idiom,

to synchronize kernel-mode, user-mode, and interrupt-mode access to shared data structures.

## OS/2 SMP Architecture

The problem with the first assumption—that the kernel is nonpreemptible—is that a kernel thread running on one processor can stomp on a data structure shared with a kernel thread running on another processor. The initial OS/2 SMP release solves this problem by avoiding it. Much of the kernel is treated as a large critical section that can be executed by just one thread—not one per processor, but one per system. Entry points into the OS/2 kernel must acquire a semaphore called a *spinlock*, the primary synchronization construct used in any MP (multiprocessor) system to guarantee mutually exclusive access to MP-critical sections of code. It's called a spinlock because a processor executes a tight spin loop waiting for the lock to be released. On 80x86 processors, threads ac-



Platform-specific drivers isolate the kernel and device drivers from the specifics of each SMP platform.

quire spinlocks using the XCHG instruction.

Will the kernel spinlock compromise the scalability of OS/2 SMP? Yes, but probably not as severely as you might think. Applications spend most of their time in user mode. Threads that do enter the kernel don't spend much time there. Some kernel components, including the scheduler and semaphores, are multithreaded and can run on multiple processors. Finally, many DLL-based system services—including all of Presentation Manager—run in user mode, where they can exploit SMP.

The problem with the second assumption—that interrupts can be disabled to synchronize kernel-mode, user-mode, and interrupt-mode access to shared data structures—is that disabling interrupts on one processor does not lock out interrupt service code running on another



processor. So spinlocks are used throughout the kernel, instead of CLI/STI and simpler RAM-based kernel semaphores, and are also used by device drivers and DLLs to guard access to data structures. New APIs enable the kernel, device drivers, and DLLs to manage spinlocks. Vendors of third-party drivers and DLLs will have to use these APIs to exploit SMP.

Because SMP systems handle interrupt management and interprocessor connection and communications in different ways, OS/2 SMP defines a set of interfaces for PSDs (platform-specific drivers) that isolate the kernel and device drivers from the specifics of the SMP hardware platform. A PSD, similar in concept to (but much simpler than) the Windows NT HAL (hardware abstraction layer), contains code to support the low-level functions of initialization, processor management, hardware interrupt management, and interprocessor communications.

Interprocessor communication enables a thread running in kernel mode on one processor to force another processor to perform an event, such as flushing the TLB (translation lookaside buffer), rescheduling, or suspending operation. Most SMP hardware platforms allow interprocessor software interrupts to be sent on a per-processor or broadcast basis. Messages are stored in the memory that is shared by all processors in the SMP configuration.

## Device Drivers

In the first release of OS/2 SMP, all hardware interrupts vector to one processor. If they didn't, existing device drivers that use CLI/STI to synchronize the execution of their kernel-mode and interrupt-mode portions would break. By performing all interrupt processing on a single processor, OS/2 SMP provides a UP-compatible environment.

If OS/2 SMP is running on a platform that is not 8259-compatible, such as the APIC (advanced programmable interrupt controller) found in new Pentium P54C chips, existing device drivers that directly program the 8259 instead of using DevHelps for this purpose will not work.

OS/2 SMP can support interrupts across processors in two ways. Existing device drivers that use spinlocks for synchronization, and that use the existing DevHelp interfaces for interrupt management, support MP in a driver-granular way. Multithreaded drivers modified for reentrancy can support a more fine-grained kind of MP. OS/2 SMP provides the necessary infrastructure to make these modifications easy—new DevHelps for spinlock management, and the platform-specific extension architecture.

## Memory Management

In OS/2 SMP, multiple processes and threads can be active and mapped in memory. Therefore, the system must duplicate several major data structures and provide efficient access to processor-specific data. Each processor has its own page directory, GDT (global descriptor table), TSS (task state segment), and PCB (processor control block).

The OS/2 SMP kernel keeps the contents of page directories consistent across processors. Whenever a shared page directory entry or page table entry is modified, all processors flush their TLBs to ensure memory coherency.

The OS/2 GDT contains special descriptors that the kernel uses to map data structures related to the current process. On a context switch, OS/2 2.1 updates the base address of these descriptors rather than using multiple descriptors, so that these data structures appear at the same virtual address regardless of which process is running. To avoid the need to rewrite code that expects these data structures to appear at a fixed virtual address, the

SMP kernel allocates a GDT for each processor. The GDT page that contains the special selectors is committed on a per-process basis, and the other GDT pages are shared among all GDTs.

The TSS controls stack switching on ring transitions. One TSS is allocated per processor, to enable concurrent ring transitions by threads running on different processors. PCBs are the main data structures used to access the per-processor data structures, such as the page directory, GDT, TSS, and spinlock information.

A final new data structure, called the PSA (processor save area), contains global kernel variables and per-processor data. The PSA contents are unique on a per-processor basis but appear at the same virtual address across processors. The PSA contains pointers to the processor's PCB and other processor-specific data, including links to the current process, the thread for the processor, and scheduling information.

## The Uniprocessor Compatibility Challenge

OS/2 1.x made ring 2 accessible for IOPL (I/O privilege) segments, enabling 16-bit OS/2 programs to use I/O-sensitive instructions such as IN, OUT, CLI, and STI. IN and OUT access I/O ports; CLI and STI disable/enable interrupts. In the UP environment, interrupt disabling synchronizes user-mode threads accessing shared resources, manages critical sections between user-mode threads and device-driver interrupt handlers, and ensures that I/O device commands are delivered to devices without interruption.

To ensure backward compatibility and make CLI/STI work in an SMP environment, OS/2 SMP does several things. IOPL moves from ring 2 to ring 0, and the TSS IOBM (I/O bit map) is cleared. Since IOPL is ring 0, the TSS IOBM governs I/O port access. By clearing the IOBM, the process still has access to the I/O ports. Most important, though, general protection faults occur when CLI and STI instructions issue from ring 2, enabling the kernel to take control and emulate the interrupt-flag semantics.

The kernel handles interrupt-flag emulation with the special CLI/STI spinlock. When a thread executes a CLI, the OS/2 SMP kernel acquires the CLI/STI spinlock; when a thread executes an STI, the kernel releases the CLI/STI spinlock. Thus, only one user-mode thread at a time can execute with interrupts disabled.

Existing OS/2 programs that use the INC and CMPXCHG instructions for synchronization can potentially run into problems. These instructions don't generate a memory lock and can't ensure that only a single processor is accessing the memory. For these programs, OS/2 SMP provides a UP execution mode that prevents a process's threads from running concurrently on different processors. To make a program run in UP mode, you'll use a utility to stamp its EXE header.

Applications that have a UP priority dependency can also have problems. An application might, for example, assume that an idle class thread will not run while a regular class thread is running. Again, UP mode is the way to ensure compatibility.

OS/2 SMP should be an effective first implementation, delivering real scalability for multithreaded OS/2 programs as well as concurrent DOS/Windows sessions. An attractive solution for inexpensive, small-footprint clients and servers, it should be available by the time you read this as a preloaded product on systems from IBM, Compaq, Wyse, and AST. ■

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# From Here to There

**A look at the value of the Point-to-Point Protocol in creating wide-area networks**

**BEN SMITH**

**T**he struggle to interconnect networks is intensifying. More and more, the networks in our offices carry two or more protocols. At the same time, these networks need to connect to other networks located across town or across the continent. The terms *multiprotocol* and *wide-area network*, or WAN, bring nods of affirmation during any discussion. The Point-to-Point Protocol, or PPP, can boast both terms and still shun the word *proprietary*. No wonder it has become popular.

PPP can be used to inexpensively extend a LAN out to a single remote device, to connect to distant segments of a LAN, or even (through the use of routers, such as the Telebit NetBlazer) to connect different LANs together. It was designed to create temporary physical links while using modems over phone lines, but it can be used for any serial-line links—even high-bandwidth connections, such as T1.

PPP was developed by the IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) through the cooperative work of dozens of individuals and commercial enterprises and the Internet's RFC (Request for Comments) publication process (originally RFCs 1171 and 1172, which were replaced by RFC 1331 and others). The motivation was the advancement of the traditional serial links that still form the twigs of much of the Internet throughout the world.

In the Unix world, these links used to be maintained by a store-and-forward file transfer and command-execution method called UUCP, the complete opposite of the stream-like TCP/IP network protocol. The development of fast and inexpensive dial-up modems has provided the technology to make serial-line networking feasible over more than just leased lines and direct RS-232 serial links.

The first generation of IP-over-serial lines, SLIP (the Serial Line Internet Protocol, defined in RFC 1055), was satisfactory only in a simplistic way. It was not based on any widely accepted standards and provided only minimal functionality—and that only to the TCP/IP world. But SLIP (see the figure "The Full SLIP Packet Format") is simple both in design and implementation,

and therefore its use spread quickly. Now PPP is rapidly replacing SLIP and is providing the basis of serial-line extensions for many other protocols as well.

## The Data Link

PPP is primarily a data-link protocol, but it goes beyond that. The design goals of PPP were to provide a method for establishing, configuring, and evaluating serial links and then encapsulating network-layer datagrams (i.e., blocks of data) over these links. PPP also includes a growing set of protocols for establishing different network-layer protocols, such as IP, IPX, Banyan Vines, and any implementation of the OSI (Open Systems Interconnection) network layer.

Unlike SLIP, PPP is based on a widely accepted structure, the HDLC (high-level data-link control) protocol (see the figure "The Full PPP Packet Format" on page 272). HDLC is an internationally adopted ISO standard. It is also the basis for the data-link layers of X.25, ISDN, V.42, Frame Relay, and even the SDLC (synchronous data-link control) protocol of IBM's SNA (Systems Network Architecture) networks.

One of the major uses of the HDLC structure is for identifying the various protocols that it can carry. Just like Ethernet, PPP can carry several different ones simultaneously.

As a general rule, PPP encapsulates the packets of the passenger (i.e., network-layer) protocol rather than fragmenting them, as

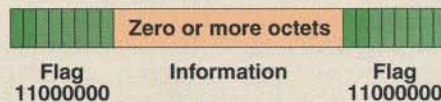
does ATM (Asynchronous Transfer Mode) in its design for optimization of available bandwidth. The emphasis of PPP is on maintaining robustness over serial links of questionable integrity. Nonetheless—and despite its far more sophisticated packet structure and management protocols—it's not as bad as many SLIP advocates predicted.

## Protocols Within

PPP defines two types of internal protocols: the LCP (Link Control Protocol), which is used for establishing, configuring, and testing the data-link connection; and the NCPs (Network Control Protocols—not Novell NetWare Core Protocols), each of which is defined for its corresponding network-layer passenger type. An example of an NCP is IPCP (the Internet Protocol Control Protocol, which is described in RFC 1332).

In this short discussion about PPP, I'm focusing more on the facilities provided by LCP than on the various NCPs. The format of the LCP and NCPs is the same; only the content is different. The former is purely PPP administrative; the latter contains the passenger-network

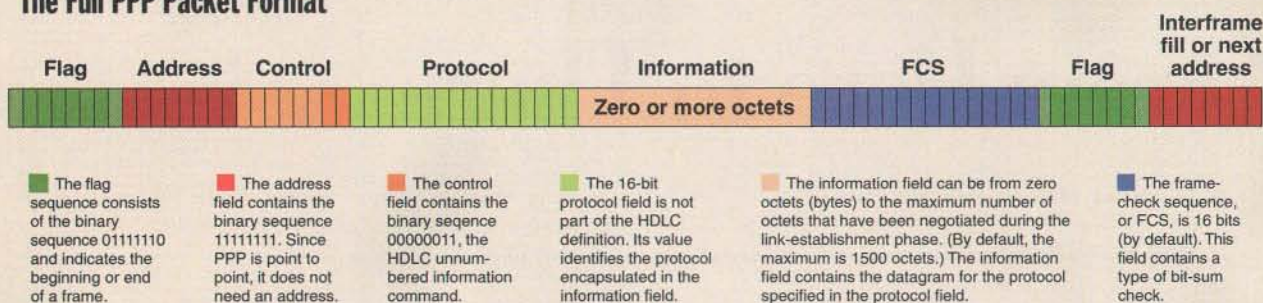
### The Full SLIP Packet Format



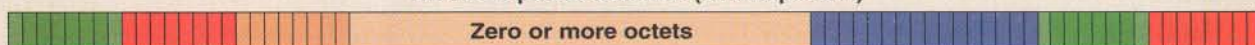
**The SLIP protocol is very simple, but it doesn't provide error checking and is not based on any widely accepted standards.**



## The Full PPP Packet Format



## The HDLC packet definition (for comparison)



The PPP protocol is far more complex than SLIP, but it offers error checking and is based on the HDLC standard. It can support a host of network protocols above it.

packets. The LCP and NCP packets have the same structure. The signal that a packet is being used for LCP is held in the protocol field. All LCP packets have a protocol identifier with a C0 (hexadecimal) in the first octet.

As with nearly all communications protocols, a successful PPP session consists of at least three stages: establishing the link, carrying on the conversations of the encapsulated protocols, and shutting down the link. It's important to note that each of these phases happens within the structure of the HDLC/PPP format, and, as such, they happen only over an already-established physical link. For example, assuming that the physical link consists of two modems and a phone line, the scheme works as follows.

Say that network segment A has business for segment B, so the PPP bridge (or router) software sees that it has to establish a connection to segment B via modem. The modems connect and establish the best physical link possible in the normal way that modems do. (We can hope that the link is at least 9600-bps V.32.) Once the physical link is established, the PPP packets start to flow.

The first PPP packets are purely LCP packets. This is the first active phase of a PPP session, establishing the link. During this phase, the two PPP segment servers test the physical-link quality and negotiate the maximum size for PPP packets. There is nothing in this phase that is specific to the passenger (i.e., network-layer) protocol or its configuration.

Once the data link has been established, PPP may move into an authentication phase if the implementation requires it. This is an implementation-specific option. There are still no NCP packets at this stage.

Only after these preliminary steps have been successfully completed does PPP enter the second phase, and the NCP packets start to flow. Each of the NCP packet headers indicates what kind of passenger is riding in the information field of that packet. The first NCP packets for an encapsulated protocol are likely to be special negotiations for that protocol—for example, special IPCP packets are used to set up the IP link and possibly to negotiate a compression method. Like the NCP packets, these network-layer-control packets carry their own special values in the protocol field; the first octet has an 80 (hexadecimal). At this point, the actual datagrams begin to flow.

This second phase is not limited to a single passenger link; several concurrent links, even those using different link-layer protocols, can be carried simultaneously. Nor is this phase of

the PPP session limited to NCP packets. There may also be some LCP packets for regular testing of the link and for renegotiating the maximum packet size.

The final phase of a PPP session shuts down the PPP services at both ends. When you consider the types of media over which this network is established—phone lines, satellite links, and the like—you realize that this phase, known as the link-termination phase, can actually happen at any time. PPP is designed to cope with this unpredictability.

## Catching On

Critics of PPP wag their fingers at the overhead of its extensive configuration phase. However, this is a trivial matter compared to the time it takes for modems to establish a physical link, no matter what kind of transmission is going to take place over it. Another criticism of PPP is its complexity, particularly when compared to SLIP. PPP was not a trivial piece of work to design, and it is not a trivial task to implement it. But the complexity of PPP provides for greater flexibility and greater reliability over less-than-ideal physical connections. PPP's foundation on established protocols also means that engineers who have already worked on other HDLC-based protocols will be working with familiar structures when they work with PPP.

Because PPP can carry so many other protocols, there are already free implementations not only for Unix platforms (there are many), but also for Macs (MacPPP), PCs (WG7J), and the Amiga (AmigaNOS). PPP is also implemented in many commercial packages, such as Novell's LAN WorkPlace for DOS, FTP Software's PC/TCP, Distinct's and Frontier Technologies' Microsoft Windows DLLs for PPP, and Morning Star Technologies' PPP for Unix platforms. In addition, you can find PPP in terminal servers and routers, such as the aforementioned Telebit NetBlazer, as well as Livingston Enterprises' PortMaster PM-11, Xylogics' MicroAnnex XL and Annex Three, Datability's VCP 200/300, and 3Com's CS/2100, among many others.

All the work that has been put into developing and implementing PPP has been worth the effort. It is fast becoming the de facto standard for inexpensive long-distance network connections, it is network-layer-protocol-independent, and it's freely available. ■

Ben Smith is a testing editor for the BYTE Lab. You can reach him on the Internet at [ben@bytepb.byte.com](mailto:ben@bytepb.byte.com) or on BIX as "bensmith."



# Port Mac Applications to the PowerPC

**Apple's Mixed Mode Manager and Universal Procedure Pointer greatly ease the transition**

**RICK GREHAN**

Longtime readers will remember that the IBM PC started out as an 8088 machine. Over time, it and the countless clones that followed grew to be 286 machines, then 386 machines, then 486 machines, then Pentium machines. With the arrival of NT, the notion of a PC clone has blurred. Machines have appeared that look to the casual observer like a high-end PC clone, but inside beats the heart of an Alpha, a Mips processor, a PowerPC, or possibly even an Intel processor.

The incursion of non-Intel CPUs into what had been a virtually all-Intel world continues to assault applications developers with a series of problems—which are, happily, closely pursued by solutions. A similar production is unfolding on the Macintosh stage, heralded by the advent of the PowerPC-toting Power Macs. Up to now, the Macintosh was a 680x0 (abbreviated as 68K hereafter) platform, and the installed base of applications software—never mind the Mac OS and Toolbox code—is a gigantic body of 68K-based code that no sane person would simply discard as a casualty necessarily incurred on the road to RISC.

## ANSI C Is King

The name of the game is C. When the first edition of *Inside Macintosh* appeared, the language that was used to describe data structures and call sequences was Pascal. This is no longer the case, however; C is the lingua franca when working with Power Macs.

To be accurate, ANSI C is the language to use with Power Macs. To non-Mac programmers, this may seem to be a given: If you say “C,” you really mean “ANSI C.” Not so among Mac programmers; nonstandard constructs not only were encouraged to flourish, but in some cases were required. For example, some Toolbox routines expect—and return—parameters in registers; others use a Pascal calling convention, which places parameters atop the stack and the return address beneath.

While compiler designers can provide “wrapper” code to insulate the C program from these peculiar calling conventions, if a programmer wanted to *hook* a Toolbox

call (i.e., provide his or her own code to replace the Toolbox routine), he or she was frequently forced into assembly language. Consequently, Mac C compilers often allowed in-line assembly code. For example, Symantec's Think C provides a non-ANSI `asm( ... )` construct that permits the programmer to commingle C and assembly.

The requirement for ANSI compliance not only provides a framework by which the Mac's API can be rigorously defined, but it can also produce some performance gains. For instance, a lazy programmer might be tempted to ignore placing a return type on a function declaration for a routine that returns no value:

```
sillyFunc(long *x)
{
    *x=*x+12;
}
```

In this case, the C compiler—assuming it's lax enough to permit this—will assume that `noValFunction()` returns an argument of type `int` so the compiler will emit code to return an `int` derived from the value of the last statement executed in the function. It's better to define the function's return type:

```
void sillyFunc(long *x) ...
```

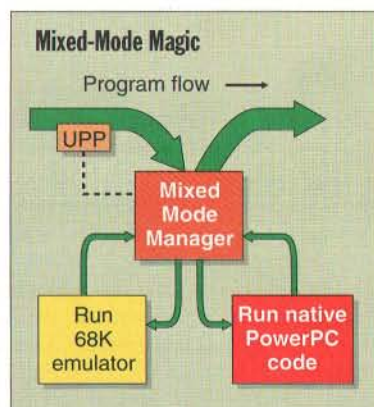
so the compiler won't generate the unneeded code.

Finally, if you want to lessen the programming work you'll have to do to verify that your application runs on all Macs, you should remove any explicit dependence on the size of the `int` data type. On 68K Macs, depending on the compiler, an `int` could be 2 or 4 bytes (some compilers provide switches that let you toggle between the two). On the PowerPC, an `int` is always 4 bytes.

Preliminary Apple documentation relating to the porting process recommends you use variables of type `int` only to access the “natural word size” of the machine, such as the declaration of a variable used only as the index in a `for` loop. Use `short` for 2-byte integers and `long` for 4-byte integers.

## Floating Point

Programmers familiar with SANE (Standard Apple Numeric Environment) will be saddened to know that the 64-bit comp (short for *computational*) data type and the 80-bit extended floating-point type are not supported on Power Macs. (The comp data type was basically a 64-bit signed integer, with the added advantage that it could return a NaN [not a number] value, useful in indicating



By examining the UPP, the Mixed Mode Manager handles switching between native PowerPC routines and routines executed by the 68K emulator.



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## Core Technologies Programming

arithmetic exceptions. The comp data type performed exact arithmetic, such as is required in accounting.) This "out with the old, in with the new" campaign is necessary because the PowerPC chip's integrated FPU handles single- and double-precision numbers (32 and 64 bits, respectively) as native data types.

What made the 80-bit extended format useful was the fact that single-precision, double-precision, and comp types could be converted to the 80-bit extended type with no loss of precision. This simplified the mixing of operands of different types. In fact, the SANE package used the extended type for all its internal calculations. Ironically, the *Apple Numerics Manual* referred to the single-precision, double-precision, and comp types as "application types" rather than as arithmetic types; they were deemed to have value as space-saving data structures rather than as data structures to be used during calculations.

Fortunately, if you need the precision, Power Macs do support a 128-bit long double. You will, however, pay a speed penalty; operations performed on long doubles are handled in emulation fashion rather than by the PowerPC's FPU.

### Code Fragments

If you set your Wayback Machine to a little over 10 years ago, when the Macintosh was first introduced, you'll recall that the machine was delivered to the world with 128 KB of RAM. Although that was a respectable amount of RAM at that time, Mac engineers realized that an application would require more RAM than might be left free after the operating system had taken what it needed. They therefore designed the system so that applications consisted of relocatable chunks of code called *segments*. And, because of the limitation on the relative jump instruction within the 68000 CPU, the size of a segment was fixed at 32 KB. Although the operating system handled the headaches of loading and unloading segments, it was nonetheless left to the programmer to tell the Mac OS *when* a particular segment was free to be discarded (using the `UnloadSeg` trap).

With the introduction of Power Macs, what had been a code segment now becomes a code *fragment*. This is not, however, a simple change in nomenclature. Code fragments can extend beyond 32 KB, they can possess local data, and they carry named entry points. An application is really just a code fragment; when an application loads on a Power Mac, the Mac OS also loads all code fragments holding routines referenced by the application and binds the references (this is done by a new Toolbox service, the Code Fragment Manager). Code fragments are therefore very similar to dynamically linked libraries.

Note that the programmer no longer needs to get involved with memory management issues (i.e., which fragments are free to be unloaded). The reason for this, of course, is that the PowerPC has its own virtual MMU (memory management unit), so the entire mechanism for memory management moves into the operating system, where it belongs.

### Mixed-Mode Programming

As I mentioned at the outset, Apple has done much work to make the transition to the PowerPC world as easy as possible. Specifically, Power Macs provide a 68K emulator that can make the machine look to the outside world like a 68020-based Mac. Actually, it looks sort of like a 68040 minus the 68040's integrated MMU and FPU. However, Apple discourages developers from pre-suming any instructions beyond those supported by the 68020.

This protects all the work that's been done to create the existing 68K code base. However, it would be crazy if the system



ran only in emulated fashion. Not only would that guarantee less-than-optimum performance, but no smooth transition to native PowerPC applications would be possible.

Apple engineers, looking at the Mac's Toolbox code, were staring at the same porting problems that any other Mac developer would be faced with during the transition. Not only would rewriting all that code take lots of time, programmers, and money, but the process would likely introduce bugs in routines that had long since been cleansed. So, Apple programmers rewrote only critical, often-called Toolbox routines in PowerPC code, leaving the rest in 68K code. These latter routines are executed by the Power Macs' 68K emulator.

Consequently, a given Toolbox routine might be written in PowerPC code, or it might be in 68K code (and therefore require the emulator). Since it would be unimaginable to place upon the programmer the job of determining—at run time—the machine-code type of a particular routine, Apple designed the Mixed Mode Manager and armed programmers with the UPP (Universal Procedure Pointer). It works as follows.

Any exported routine in a code fragment (i.e., a routine that can be called from outside the fragment) is accessed via a UPP. Setting up the UPP is the job of the caller (i.e., the caller calls the exported routine through the UPP). If the exported routine is composed of 68K code, then the UPP consists of just a typical pointer to the address of the routine's entry point. However, if the exported routine is composed of PowerPC code, the UPP is a data structure (called a *routine descriptor*), typically about 32 bytes in size, headed by a trap word that leads into the Mixed Mode Manager.

Consequently, calling the UPP either leads your program directly to the 68K code or transfers control to the Mixed Mode Manager. It is the Mixed Mode Manager's job to deduce where the application is coming from and where it's going to and to determine if a switch from native PowerPC code to the 68K emulator (or back) is needed. Note that this also requires moving arguments around (e.g., from registers to the stack) so that the called routine finds data where it expects it.

Happily, C/C++ compilers for PowerPC Macs already provide functions and macros that automate the process of building UPPs. Apple guidelines suggest that, wherever your code uses a ProcPtr, you replace it with a UniversalProcPtr.

### A Stroke of Genius

Faced with the admittedly daunting task of shepherding a well-established system into an entirely new processor architecture, Apple appears to be doing a remarkable job of accommodating developers during the transition. Admittedly, the transition isn't trouble-free; I have my own pile of C code that I'll have to sift through via search-and-replace and turn every `int` into `short`.

On the bright side, my opinion is that the Mixed Mode Manager (with its accompanying UPPs) is something of a stroke of genius. What it provides is a way for Apple to continue to move more of the Toolbox to native code, and programmers will see the benefits without having to make any alterations of their own.

Of course, it also means that as you target those routines that will yield the greatest performance if converted to PowerPC code, you'll be doing some code-tweaking for a while. But you're used to that, right? ■

*Rick Grehan is technical director of the BYTE Lab. Before coming to BYTE, he worked as a programmer. He has a B.S. in physics and applied mathematics and an M.S. in mathematics/computer science. He can be reached on the Internet or BIX at rick\_g@bix.com.*

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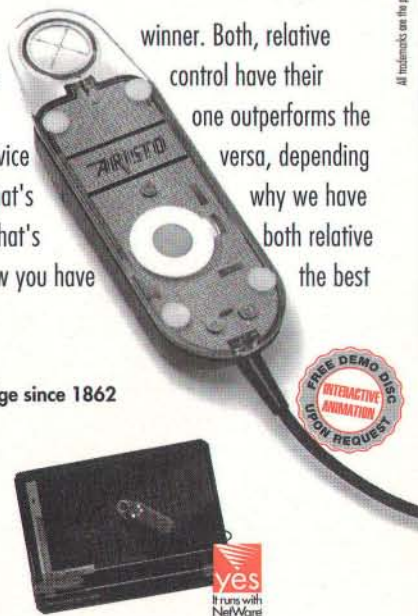
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# URGENT—YOUR INPUT NEEDED

Dear Reader—

The BYTE State of the Art section is devoted to delivering in-depth information about specific topics in computing on a monthly basis. In the November issue, the State of the Art section will cover the technologies and strategies involved in Network Management.

To ensure that our coverage is in tune with your needs, we request that you fill out the following questionnaire and fax it back to us. It will tell us about your installation and about your needs and interests and help us focus our coverage of Network Management to best address your concerns. Please take a few minutes to fill out this form and fax or mail a copy of it back to us.

Of course, questionnaires such as this are necessarily limiting. If you'd like to see other areas covered, or if you want to tell us your ideas about network management, please contact one of the SOTA section editors at the following E-mail addresses. Thank you.

**Bob Ryan**, b.ryan@bix.com  
**Russ Kay**, russellk@bix.com  
**Scott Wallace**, swallace@bix.com

## Network Management

### Describe your network:

(check all that apply)

- ☐ LAN with remote access
- ☐ single-segment homogeneous LAN
- ☐ multiple-segment homogeneous LAN
- ☐ mixed LAN environment (e.g., LocalTalk plus Ethernet)
- ☐ multiple homogeneous LANs linked via a WAN
- ☐ multiple heterogeneous LANs linked via a WAN
- ☐ multiple LANs connected via an SNA backbone
- ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

### Does your network include

- ☐ bridges?
- ☐ routers?
- ☐ concentrators/hubs?
- ☐ multiprotocol routers?
- ☐ multiplexers for external connections?

### What protocols do you use?

- ☐ IPX/SPX
- ☐ TCP/IP
- ☐ NetBUI
- ☐ NetBIOS
- ☐ AppleTalk
- ☐ SNA
- ☐ DECnet
- ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe your WAN:

#### Bandwidth

- ☐ 56/64K
- ☐ fractional T1
- ☐ T1
- ☐ T3
- ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Connections

- ☐ dedicated point-to-point links
- ☐ public-access network
- ☐ on-demand connections (e.g., dial-up)

#### Technologies

- ☐ ISDN
- ☐ Switched-56
- ☐ Frame relay
- ☐ SMDS
- ☐ X.25
- ☐ ATM

### Do you currently support SNMP?

yes\_\_\_\_ no\_\_\_\_

### Do you plan to deploy SNMP?

yes\_\_\_\_ no\_\_\_\_

### Are you investigating SNMP?

yes\_\_\_\_ no\_\_\_\_

### Do you use an integrated management system, such as NetView or OpenView?

yes\_\_\_\_ no\_\_\_\_

If so, which one? \_\_\_\_\_

### For the following, please rate each topic using this scale:

Not at all interested Very interested  
1 2 3 4 5

- ☐ Network administration tools
- ☐ Hierarchical storage management
- ☐ Configuration management
- ☐ Software/update distribution management
- ☐ Physical/electrical management
- ☐ Disaster recovery/backup
- ☐ Network management systems
- ☐ Security management

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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JERRY POURNELLE

# A Pentium Is Sounded Out

**We're just about recovered** from the earthquake. Indeed, now that I've gotten rid of about 50 cubic feet of junk and sent more—including the 8-inch disks on which I wrote what appears to be the first novel ever written using a computer as a word processor—to storage, and have rebuilt my bookcases, the Great Hall is cleaner than it has been for five years; meaning that there's room for new stuff, and that wasn't long in arriving.

It's a lot of fun out here at the bleeding edge of technology, but it's not all roses. I've just spent three very long days getting a new Pentium system to behave. I'm not really complaining: I know there are a lot of young writers out there who'd love to trade places with me, and if I slow down, one of them may just be able to do it. Anyway, I learned a lot, and now you won't have to make the same mistakes I did.

It all started when Larry Aldridge became vice president of marketing for PC Power & Cooling. He wanted to build me a Pentium system to demonstrate just how well the PC Power & Cooling tower-configuration cases, power supplies,

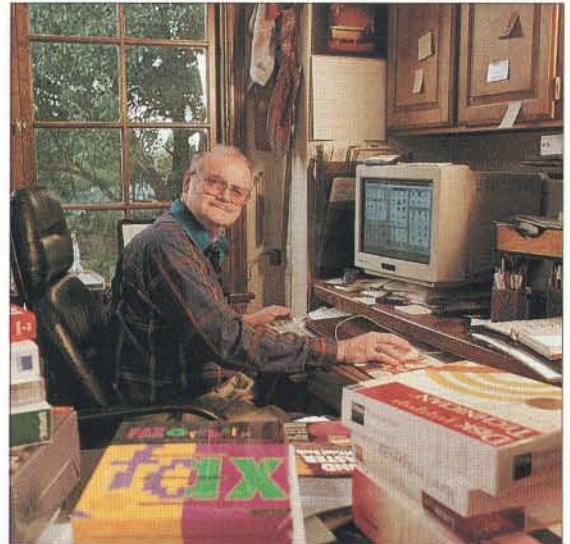
chip-cooling fans, and heat sensors can solve Pentium heat problems. Before it was over, he used a Micronics PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect) motherboard, a really neat DEC DSP3107 1-GB SCSI hard drive, a Plextor Double Speed Plus CD-ROM drive (formerly the Texel CD-ROM drive), and a Distributed Processing Technology SmartCache SCSI caching hard drive controller that runs both the DEC hard drive and the Plextor CD-ROM drive. SmartCache will shortly run my Palindrome DAT (digital audiotape) drive and one or more optical drives. ATI Technologies contributed their Graphics Ultra Pro Mach 32 PCI video board. Larry put the basic system together and tested it before sending it on to me.

Our NEC MultiSync 4FG monitor was damaged a bit in the earthquake. Actually, the only real damage was to the swivel base. The monitor works just fine—we now use the fire ring for a wok as a base—but NEC sent a MultiSync 5FG to replace it. I connected that to the new Pentium system and got out one of my "Pournelle-configuration" Northgate keyboards, in

my opinion still the best keyboard around. When I turned on the machine, the video came up, but nothing else happened.

I suppose I had a premonition, because I rolled out one of the heavy-duty worktables and laid the new tower-configuration machine on its side. Opening the computer revealed that the SCSI cable had disconnected from the controller, so it was no wonder the system didn't boot. Connecting the cable fixed that. The machine booted up fine with DOS 5, QEMM 6.03, and Windows 3.1. So far, so good.

There was no network card in the Pentium system, so I used Traveling Software's LapLink Remote Access for the initial file transfers. If you use LapLink to connect to a machine that is itself connected to any network, including Windows for Workgroups, you have access to the entire network. Even connected with a parallel cable, it's slow compared to Ethernet, but it does work, and I used it to bring over Norton Commander. I always do that first thing. There are, I suppose, other ways to edit, copy, rename, move, and delete files, but Commander's ability to



AMY ETRA © 1994

**Jerry names his new Pentium system, which he thrusts into the multimedia stream by testing several sound boards**



look into odd-format files is pretty nifty, and the file finder is as good as any I know. Mostly, though, my fingers know Norton Commander down to the cellular level, and I'd be lost without it.

LapLink demands that you name the machine it's running on. I always do that anyway, and the new Pentium system has become Percival, as opposed to Percy, which is the IBM PS/2 Model 77.

**Once I got Norton** Commander up, it was time to install a sound board. Since everything was working fine, I hadn't bothered to sit down and read the documents that came with Percival. I just got out the sound boards and started in. That's when my education began.

The first thing I tried was a Creative Labs Sound Blaster 16 SCSI-2 board. Alas, when I turned on the machine, it wouldn't boot. I thought about that. The SmartCache controller has a SCSI connection, and the Sound Blaster board has a SCSI controller built onto it as well. Can two SCSI connections exist on one bus? If they can, can they both be addressed to the same SCSI address?

As it happens, the answer to both questions is yes. I ought to have known that,

but for some odd reason I assumed the problem had to do with SCSI interference, and I looked for another sound board. The next one I found was a Sound Blaster Pro; alas, the board didn't say what model it was. The only identification on it was "CT-1600" written in the upper left corner. The machine came up fine with that, but all my Sound Blaster Pro software disks were destroyed in the earthquake. Since I wasn't sure what board I had, I tried the Sound Blaster 16 software. That's very well done stuff, but of course the software couldn't find the board. It offered to look at a variety of addresses with a number of interrupts, but it eventually reported failure.

Because the Sound Blaster Pro is last year's stuff anyway, I put in a call to Creative Labs to get a new Sound Blaster 16 board with the latest software. Then I looked through recent arrivals. Sure enough, we had a Logitech SoundMan 16 board. This actually incorporates two chip sets on one board: the 8-bit Creative Labs Sound Blaster-compatible chip set, and the 16-bit Media Vision chip set, called SoundMan 16. There are no jumpers on the SoundMan; it's all set up by software.

The installation requires two separate IRQ (interrupt request) lines, one for Sound Blaster and the other for SoundMan. Some older games demand a Sound Blaster at IRQ 5; the Logitech board offers a choice of 2, 3, 5, or 7, as well as three I/O port addresses. The SoundMan IRQ can be set to just about any value between 2 and 15. There are also choices of DMA channels between 0 and 7; you need two of those—one for Sound Blaster and one for SoundMan—with default values of 1 and 5, respectively.

DMA is a way for devices to send data directly to memory without funneling it through the CPU. DMA channels 0-3 are 8-bit; channels 4-7 were introduced with the IBM AT 16-bit bus and are 16-bit.

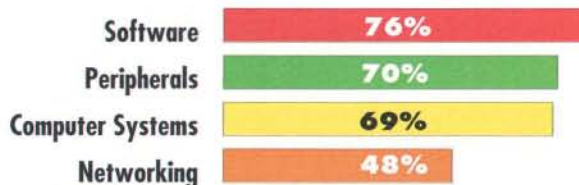
The SoundMan installation software performs a bunch of tests. Once you've chosen values that work, it offers to write them into your initialization files. I had to fiddle with some of the settings. In particular, DMA channel 1 was not working properly.

I called my friend Rich Heimlich. Rich tests games for a living. He also knows more about using sound boards than anyone I know and quite literally wrote the book on Sound Blaster boards. He said

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that he had seen this problem before: some motherboards step all over DMA channel 1, apparently through cross talk on traces laid too close together. The remedy is to use a different DMA channel (generally 3), and, alas, some applications, including most older games, expect Sound Blaster on DMA channel 1 and can't use another.

This was worrisome. I called Aldridge, who called Micronics, and we soon had the answer: the Micronics motherboard lets you use either DMA channel 1 or 3 to connect to the parallel port. Doing that converts your port to a fast parallel port (for software that knows how to use it). This is highly desirable. More and more applications know how to make use of fast parallel ports, which are rapidly becoming a kind of poor man's Ethernet.

In assembling Percival, Aldridge had left the DMA channels floating free, and that, as it turns out, can generate noise in channels 1 and 3, which makes them unreliable. The remedy is to use jumpers to strap the parallel port to DMA channel 3. I did that, and Sound Blaster was able to use DMA channel 1 just fine. After that, I had no problems installing the SoundMan software.

Next step was to install an Intel EtherExpress card. Like SoundMan, the EtherExpress card has no jumpers; all settings are done with Intel's SoftSet software. The card requires an I/O port address and an IRQ, and those have to be different from the ones used by the sound board. SoftSet will try to find values not in use by anything else, but you can choose your own settings. Since nothing I know of uses IRQ 10, I set the network card to that. Then I installed Windows for Workgroups 3.11.

The easy way to do that is to create a disk directory called W4WG, copy all nine installation floppy disks to it, and then do a custom installation. This not only saves time, but W4WG can sometimes get so confused during installation that it forgets how to access floppy disks. However, it never forgets how to find a hard disk directory. The installation went smoothly enough, and everything worked just fine until Alex got home.

**Alex has a sort of portable** "Murphy" field: if something can break, he can break it. In this case, he found problems with the sound. A quick check showed

why that wasn't working: the EtherExpress card was set to use IRQ 5, the same one as the Sound Blaster chip-set part of the SoundMan 16 board. I knew I had set that to IRQ 10, but then I remembered: W4WG likes IRQ 5 as the setting for the EtherExpress card, and when you install W4WG, it sets the card to that value no matter what value it finds it at. It doesn't bother to tell you it did that, either. In case you're wondering, this is a bug.

The remedy is to bring up Windows (use WIN /n to bring up W4WG without the network if the IRQ clash is so severe that it kills Windows), go into the Network window, open Network Settings, double-click on the Intel EtherExpress line in the menu, and set the IRQ to 10. You'll have to restart Windows, but this time the card will stay at IRQ 10.

We then started importing some sound effects—and achieved one of the most spectacular disk crashes I've ever seen.

**It happened all at once.** We were experimenting with MIDI wave sounds, and suddenly the C drive was filled with lost chains and cross-linked files. Pretty soon, one of the cross-linked files was COMMAND.COM, after which the machine would work only when booted from a floppy disk.

The DSP3107 hard drive is divided into two 500-MB logical drives. The D drive was fine, but the C drive was messed up beyond hope of repair. Sometimes you can get out of a bad situation with Norton Utilities, but this time the Norton programs were themselves cross-linked. There was nothing to do but reformat the hard disk, or at least the C drive.

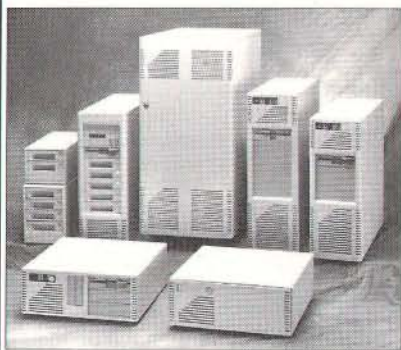
Unfortunately, even that didn't do it. We brought up the machine with a floppy disk that had FORMAT.COM on it, but when formatted with the /S qualifier, the C drive still wouldn't boot. It showed IO.SYS and COMMAND.COM as truncated. Oddly enough, though, using the SYS command took care of the situation. By now it was 4:00 a.m., and I went to bed.

Next morning I removed the sound board and completed the recovery. That didn't take long, because when I copied the W4WG floppy disks, I did it to the D drive. Once W4WG was running, it took almost no time to use the network to restore nearly everything to the C drive.

*continued*



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## Pournelle

One thing I didn't restore was the version of QEMM that Larry had used in setting Percival up; that was just plain gone. On the other hand, I have a new copy of QEMM 7.03, so I installed that. It works just fine, yielding 600 KB for DOS and Windows without using QEMM Stealth. When everything is stable and backed up, it will be time enough to experiment with Stealth. For the moment, I don't have any programs that need more than 600 KB, and I'll leave well enough alone.

Actually, things didn't go quite as smoothly as I implied. For about an hour, I had more mysterious problems. Then I found out that my SmartCache controller was addressed to DC00, and if you don't tell QEMM to exclude DC00 to DEFF, the system can't possibly work. That done, though, everything was fine without the sound board.

Then I did what I should have done in the first place: read Percival's documents, particularly those having to do with the controller. It didn't take very long to see what the problem was.

SmartCache uses DMA to speed up disk reads. In particular, it uses DMA channel 5. The SoundMan board also uses DMA channel 5. When SoundMan put a wave sound onto channel 5 just as SmartCache did a write to disk, we wrote "Hail Columbia" all over the FAT (file allocation table). No wonder it crashed.

The simple remedy was to reinstall the SoundMan board and be very careful not to use DMA channel 5. With channel 3 strapped down to the parallel port, channel 1 worked just fine for Sound Blaster, and SoundMan had no problem with channel 7. We played around with enough MIDI wave sounds to be sure everything was working. No problems.

The Logitech SoundMan board works just fine, and it's compatible with both Media Vision's Pro Audio and Sound Blaster, as well as MIDI and various Windows sounds. We had the WindSurfer flopping about, and SoundMan comes with Icon Hear It, a way to associate sounds with different icons and Windows activities. Alas, there are problems, not with SoundMan, which works about as well as anything else, but with the whole multimedia sound business.

**There are problems** with cables. Every CD-ROM drive seems to have a different pin-out for internal audio output. At this point, I'd better explain for those just getting started.

Your CD-ROM drive is similar to the CD player in your stereo. Both can take recorded sound off a CD and send it to an



amplifier or headphones. In addition, a CD-ROM drive can get digital data from a CD and move it to the computer bus; the computer translates that data into sound that you can hear. These two kinds of "recorded sound" are quite different, and they come out in different places.

Digital audio—like all other digital data—comes out of your CD-ROM player through the big, flat SCSI cable. It goes to your CD-ROM controller (which may be your sound board; in my case, the CD-ROM drive is on the same SCSI cable as my regular hard drive, and the controller is SmartCache). By contrast, standard audio comes out the front of your CD-ROM player; you can hear it by plugging in a stereo headset. In addition, every CD-ROM player has an audio connector on the back of the drive, and, with the proper cable, you can pipe that audio to the sound board so it can play it through the speakers.

Unfortunately, there are no standards for that internal audio, and every CD-ROM

drive seems to use a different cable connector and pin-out. Most sound-board companies will sell you a cable if you tell them what model of their sound board you're using and what make of CD-ROM drive you have.



Of course, if you buy your sound board and CD-ROM drive as part of a kit (e.g., Creative Labs' Sound Blaster Digital Edge CD Multimedia Kit), you won't have that problem, because the internal cable will be included. That's one of the main advantages to buying such kits: everything works together.

In my case, SmartCache is faster than Sound Blaster, and the Plextor CD-ROM drive works well with it; and, of course, the controller gives me hardware caching on the controller. Understand, very few applications *need* that much speed or, indeed, can take advantage of it, so the Sound Blaster Digital Edge CD Multimedia Kit is plenty good enough for almost anyone and is one of the easiest ways to get

both sound and a CD-ROM drive.

Anyway, I didn't have an internal cable; so I took a Radio Shack 6-foot stereo audio cable, plugged that into the earphone jack on the CD-ROM drive, and plugged the other end into the input jack (*not* the microphone jack) on the back of the SoundMan board. Later on, the same thing worked when we changed over to a Sound Blaster 16 board. When everything is stable, I'll get the right internal cable and connect things up, but for now the external cable works, and it's the only audio-cable standard in the business.

**Once I was sure** the SoundMan board worked, I wanted to try Creative Labs' Wave Blaster add-on board, because everyone tells me it's neat. My only problem was that when I put the Sound Blaster 16 board in, Percival wouldn't boot. All my Sound Blaster 16 boards have SCSI on them, and if there's any way to disable that, the documents don't tell me. There's also no way to change the SCSI address from whatever default it's set to. There is a way to readdress the SmartCache board from SCSI 7 to SCSI 6.

Fortunately, Alex got home before I did

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anything to the SmartCache board, because the SCSI ID is irrelevant; you can have two SCSI buses going at once, provided each has its own IRQ and DMA channel. The reason that Percival wouldn't come up with the Sound Blaster 16 board installed is that one function of that board defaults to DMA channel 5. As we've seen, SmartCache uses that, too.

That was when I got out the Distributed Processing Technology documents and studied everything. They're quite complete and clear enough. I found out that the controller uses memory address C800 by default, but it's set to DC00 on mine; it needs an I/O port address, and that can be 330h, an address the Sound Blaster 16 board defaults to; another place to be wary. The interrupt is set to IRQ 15, which is unlikely to be used by anything else.

Creative Labs provides complete instructions with diagrams on how to use jumpers to set all the various addresses, IRQs, and DMA channels on their Sound Blaster 16 board. One warning: it's in the thin document called *Getting Started* and is *not* repeated in the thicker *Reference Manual*; you should keep both. We used the manual to set the 16-bit DMA channel to 7 and otherwise used the defaults on the Sound Blaster 16 board. Those include a default to IRQ 5, the same as W4WG, and the MIDI port defaults to 330h, which might be in use by either the controller or the network card. I made sure those didn't interfere.

The machine came up just fine. Alex installed the Sound Blaster 16 software, including the Windows drivers. We made sure that all worked. Then we shut down

and attached the Wave Blaster board. Wave Blaster piggybacks onto the Sound Blaster 16 board, and it does wonders for the sound. It has no settings; just attach it to the Sound Blaster 16 board.

With that in place, Mr. Spock really sounds like Mr. Spock, music has a brilliance it didn't formerly have, and it all sounds really nice, especially if you've got Creative Labs' Yamaha-designed Active Servo Technology speakers. These high-end speakers are about twice the size of the (actually very good) smaller speakers that come in the Sound Blaster Digital Edge CD Multimedia Kit, and if you care a lot about sound quality, they're worth the price. Of course, if you *really* care about sound quality, you'll feed the sound-board output into a regular stereo mixer, but that's going farther than I care to.

Next thing to look at was ATI Technologies' MediaMerge. This comes with an audio editor, a text editor to make text animations and flying logos, a scene editor, a storyboard editor, and a partridge in a pear tree. We've looked only at the audio editor. Alex used it to tune up the wave forms of various sound icons, add reverberations, clip sounds, and put in silence. He also tried to do some noise removal. This is as good as any wave editor he has seen, but note that he's not especially fond of any we have; none of them lets you change pitch, for example. He was able to put together some sounds so Mr. Spock can respond when the ingenue screams for help. More on that another time.

Alas, we're still getting anomalies. If you leave the system running with Berke-

ley Systems' After Dark with sound, after an interval that can be as short as 10 minutes and as long as 8 hours, the sound is messed up. Simple sounds work, but wave sounds are truncated or don't play at all. The only remedy is to power down the system. Neither Ctrl-Alt-Del nor hardware reset fixes it, and once I have the sound problem, I can't even cleanly exit W4WG.

I don't know why. My guess is drivers interacting with the Pentium, but whether it's Berkeley Systems' software or the Sound Blaster 16 driver isn't clear. It's certainly not a defective sound board; I've tried several Sound Blaster 16 and Wave Blaster boards, and I always get the same result. I'll keep looking, and I expect the problems will be fixed by the time you read this.

**We've also had difficulty** getting Word for Windows to print across the network. The symptoms are precisely the same as when we tried to get an OS/2 machine running OS/2 LAN Server to print through a W4WG network (see my April column). Because we were able to get a W4WG machine to print files through a printer attached to that OS/2 machine, I have to conclude that the guilty party is Print Manager, not OS/2.

It's clearly the case that if I attach the printer to the OS/2 system, I have no problems printing from any machine on the network, while even without any OS/2 machines on the network, the best way to print through W4WG is to send the file across to the machine that has the printer, read it into Word, and print it locally.

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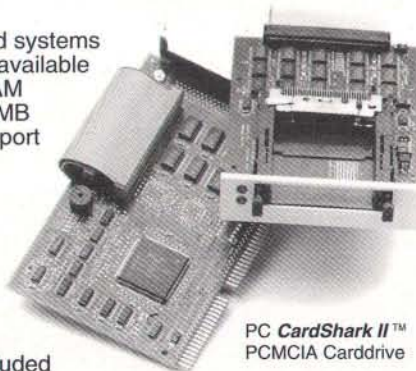
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Another anomaly to look into. I'm sure it will be fixed when I learn the proper settings for the W4WG machines, but the fact is that OS/2 LAN Server seems to be more reliable when printing across a network than W4WG.

This mostly shows that we need a good Windows debugger. Windows is cool if you get everything set right, but no one really knows what's going on inside the .INI files. It's a pain to get Print Manager set up properly. Then, too, every now and then when Windows comes up, it reports that a group file has been clobbered. When that happens, you can replace the dead group file with a copy you've saved—and if you don't save copies of your group files in their own subdirectory, you'll one day wish you had—or you can painstakingly rebuild the group file by hand.

Actually, you'll need to do both. That is, you must go into the Windows subdirectory and delete the aberrant group file, come back to Program Manager and create a new group file, copy your saved group file into the Windows subdirectory, and restart Windows. With luck, that will solve the problem of a clobbered group file.

You have to do all this because Windows has no debugger and group files can't be edited by human beings. No one knows why. If someone knows of a good Windows debugger, please let me know.

By contrast, System Notebook (formerly ConfigWiz) from VacNat Software is a neat system-configuration editor for OS/2. OS/2 settings are done by means of a pop-up notebook, but, alas, IBM didn't provide one for figuring out the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files.

System Notebook brings up multiple pages of a notebook and explains what changes you can make. When it's done, it saves it all as new OS/2 CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files. If you run OS/2, you need this. I wish the Windows people would come up with something as neat. Recommended.

**We expect better Windows** video drivers for the Pentium PCI bus. The best overall Win Tachometer performance of the Pentium PCI with ATI Technologies' Mach 32 PCI board has been 52, and we can nearly get that on the 486DX2/25 with a VL-Bus Mach 32 board. The fastest system in the house is still SuperCow, the Gateway 2000 486DX2/33 with a Hercules Dynamite Pro video board. Of

course, a Win Tachometer rating over 50 is nothing to sneeze at; it wasn't all that long ago I was satisfied with machines that had ratings of 16 to 20. Now, anything under 30 seems intolerably slow. So it goes.

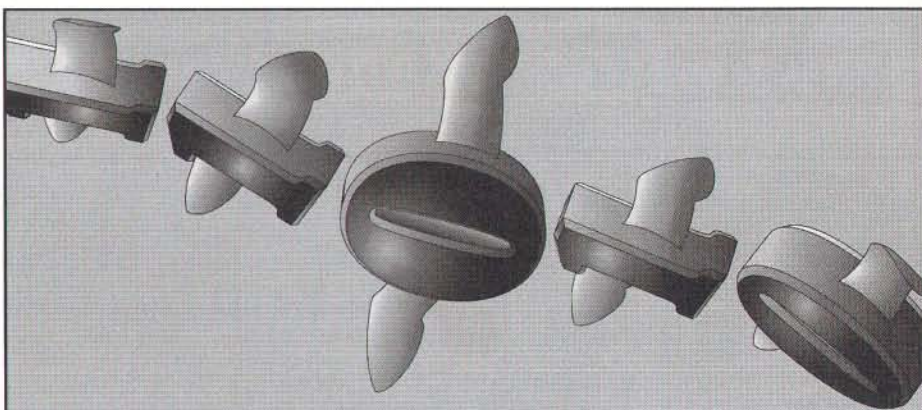
I have reports that Number Nine Computer has already solved the driver problem, and Number Nine PCI boards in Pentium machines are getting truly astonishing Win Tachometer results. We'll have one here soon, and I'll let you know.

While we're waiting for new drivers to take advantage of the Pentium's architecture, we shouldn't forget that the PowerPC chip is rushing upon us. Informants tell me that some software already runs faster on the PowerPC than on the Pentium; some of it *much* faster. All of which means that hardware has again leaped ahead of software, and, as the software people catch up, we'll see more spectacular improvements in what these machines can do. But by the time we get jaded with those new improvements, we'll have even-better hardware.

I can remember when a 10-MB hard drive cost several thousand dollars. CD-ROM drives used to be old and slow and cost a thousand dollars. The street price of my 1-GB DEC DSP3107 hard drive will be well under a grand when you read this, and CD-ROM drives cost less than 8-inch floppy drives used to. Ain't it wonderful?

Despite residual glitches, I don't doubt that you can get a Pentium, ATI Technologies' Graphics Ultra Pro Mach 32 PCI board, and Sound Blaster/Wave Blaster sound boards working together; mine does most of the time, the only problems being with wave sounds in W4WG. The Pentium should be a real killer of a flight simulator and a truly awesome games machine; which means that as the right software is developed, it will also be excellent for desktop conferencing, multimedia, and that sort of thing. At least that's what you can tell your boss when you say you have to have one.

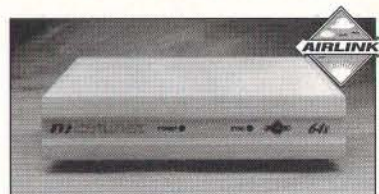
**One multimedia** package we looked at was part of Microsoft's newest Home (as opposed to Office) series, Multimedia Schubert 1.0. This product group also includes Mozart and Stravinsky. It's built



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## Pournelle

around the Quintet in A Major (*The Trout*). Like the rest of this series, it's really well done, with background information on the composer and his times, and a music discussion that starts simple and gets as technical as I want. I find these really do add to musical enjoyment, and I recommend the series for anyone who is or might want to become interested in classical music.

I have about a zillion other multimedia programs, including Grolier's and Compton's encyclopedias. I suppose I should come up with some way to choose one multimedia program over another, but the fact is they're all good and getting better. If you don't have one of them, you should; there's no point in waiting for better, not that better multimedia packages won't be here soon enough. Really good whizbang sound boards are coming this year, but what we already have is darned good, too.

My advice is to get what's out there. For instance the combination of the Sound Blaster Digital Edge CD Multimedia Kit, a Sound Blaster 16 board with a Wave Blaster add-on board, and a good double- or triple-speed CD-ROM drive is already good enough and will last you the year or so that it takes to perfect the new stuff that's coming later this year. If you keep waiting for the best, you'll miss out on everything.

**The Macintosh version** of Roberta Pournelle's reading program, *The Literacy Connection*, is done. She'll be doing the grand introduction at her session of the International Conference on Technology in Education in London later this month.

This version was done in SuperCard. The programmer, Chris Innanen, used the QuickBasic code I did in the mid-1980s and began to convert that to HyperCard. Roberta then decided she wanted a color version, which required that they switch to Silicon Beach's SuperCard. SuperCard was then bought by Aldus and now has been sold to Allegiant Technologies. SuperCard is HyperCard on steroids. The basics are fairly easily learned.

As Roberta's program shows, you can do some pretty complex programs in SuperCard, but that requires actual programming. HyperCard and SuperCard are still the best ways to get involved in Mac programming. Chris reports that if the newest version of HyperCard had been available, he would probably have done the program in that, but the advantages of HyperCard II over SuperCard aren't so great that he's going to convert.

The result is a script-driven engine that lets Roberta change the lesson plans without extensive programming. I've talked

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about The Literacy Connection before. Like the PC version, the Mac version requires a literate person to read the screens to the student, but the "instructor" doesn't have to be a teacher because all the instructions are at fourth-grade level. In one school, a 10-year-old uses the program on an Osborne luggable to teach reading to first-graders. The next version of The Literacy Connection should be self-pronouncing and thus do away with the need for an instructor.

We don't know of anyone who has gone through all 70 lessons and emerged unable to read English; we know it has worked with many students diagnosed as dyslexic or learning-disabled, as well as with normal and gifted students. It unabashedly teaches systematic phonics. In our judgment, to be able to read implies the ability to read any English word, whether or not you have seen it before, thus instantly making your reading and speaking vocabulary identical.

The Mac version is much changed from the PC version I programmed several years ago. It has color and animations. Unlike much software that tries to be educational, The Literacy Connection is not a game. An upcoming version will incorporate a game as a reward for getting the lesson right. Kids who've seen the test version of the game go bonkers for it, but it's still the case that games are more to impress publishers and parents than kids; children find that actually learning to read is a pretty rewarding experience all by itself.

We've had a fairly hefty demand for an Apple II version of The Literacy Connection. Now that schools are converting those Apple IIs to Macs, the pressure has been on to get a Mac version done, and Roberta regrets that it took a lot longer than she thought it would. She's polishing up the manual as I write this.

I know I write about her program a lot, but it is my considered opinion that she's got the best reading instruction program in existence; and if kids can't read, they aren't going to learn much else in school. Anyway, this is available, it works, and I'm proud to be able to recommend it.

**I was hoping the game** of the month would be SimCity 2000 by Maxis, but I can't seem to install the DOS version. This is twice now, but I'll keep trying. Meanwhile, I've gone back to an ancient game called Sword of Aragon from SSI. It still plays well. Another old-timer I like is QQP's Battles of Destiny.

Maxis also publishes SimHealth, which is a model of health care. Like all models,

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many of the conclusions are built into the model's assumptions. This is an excellent tool to stimulate discussion; the danger lies in using such simulations as real models of the real world. With that caveat, I can recommend the program to those interested in health-care policy.

The book of the month is by Richard E. Cytowic, M.D., *The Man Who Tasted Shapes* (Tarcher/Putnam, 1993). You may never have heard of synesthesia, a sort of scrambling of senses that might cause you to smell in colors or, as the title suggests,

taste shapes; but it's very real, and this entertaining book tells of some experiences the author has had with such people, using their experiences to inquire into the nature of sensation and perception. I guess that sounds more like a book reviewer than me, which means I'm getting tired. Anyway, you'll like the book. The most useful computer book this month was Brian Livingston's *Windows 3.1 Secrets* (InfoWorld Technical Books, 1992).

Next month: more on Percival. With luck, we'll get him running NextStep,

OS/2, and Windows NT so we can do some comparisons. ■

*Jerry Pournelle holds a doctorate in psychology and is a science fiction writer who also earns a comfortable living writing about computers present and future. Jerry welcomes readers' comments and opinions. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Jerry Pournelle, c/o BYTE, One Phoenix Mill Lane, Peterborough, NH 03458. Please put your address on the letter as well as on the envelope. Due to the high volume of letters, Jerry cannot guarantee a personal reply. You can also contact him on the Internet or BIX at jerry@bix.com.*

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Available now for the Mac, **The Literacy Connection** (\$100 postpaid, California residents add \$8.25 state tax) is the best reading instruction program in existence. Contact **The Literacy Connection**, 12190 1/2 Ventura Blvd., Suite 372, Studio City, CA 91604. **Circle 1146 on Inquiry Card.**

ATI Technologies' **MediaMerge** (\$299) multimedia editor for sound, text, and graphics is as good as any editor we've seen. Contact **ATI Technologies, Inc.**, 33 Commerce Valley Dr. E, Thornhill, Ontario, Canada L3T 7N6, (905) 882-2600; fax (905) 882-2620. **Circle 1147.**

Microsoft's **Multimedia Schubert 1.0** (\$79.95) really does add to musical enjoyment. Contact **Microsoft Corp.**, 1 Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052, (800) 426-9400 or (206) 882-8080; fax (206) 883-8101. **Circle 1148.**

The **Plextor Double Speed Plus** (\$329) CD-ROM drive works well with my multimedia system configuration. Contact **Plextor**, 4255 Burton Dr., Santa Clara, CA 95054, (800) 886-3935 or (408) 980-1838; fax (408) 986-1010. **Circle 1149.**

**SimHealth** (\$39.95), a model of health care, is an excellent tool to stimulate discussion for those interested in health-care policy. Contact **Maxis**, 2 Theater Sq., Orinda, CA 94563, (800) 336-2947 or (510) 254-9700; fax (510) 253-3736. **Circle 1150.**

**SmartCache III** SCSI host adapters (from \$285 to \$595) are a family of solid, trouble-free SCSI caching hard drive controllers. Contact **Distributed Processing Technology**, 140 Cadence Dr., Maitland, FL 32751, (800) 322-4378 or (407) 830-5522; fax (407) 260-5366. **Circle 1151.**

The Creative Labs multimedia sound boards tested on my Pentium system include the **Sound Blaster 16 SCSI-2** (\$279.95), the **Sound Blaster Pro Deluxe** (\$179.95), and the **Wave Blaster** (\$249.95). Contact **Creative Labs**, 1901 McCarthy Blvd., Milpitas, CA 95035, (800) 998-5227 or (408) 428-6600; fax (408) 428-6611. **Circle 1152.**

Logitech's **SoundMan 16** (\$199) sound board works just fine on my Pentium system. Contact **Logitech**, 6505 Kaiser Dr., Fremont, CA 94555, (800) 231-7717 or (510) 795-8500; fax (800) 732-3102. **Circle 1153.**

With **SuperCard** (\$299), you can do some pretty complex programs on the Mac. Contact **Allegiant Technologies**, 6496 Weathers Place, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92121, (619) 587-0500; fax (619) 587-1314. **Circle 1154.**

**System Notebook** (\$24 postpaid) is a neat system-configuration editor for OS/2. If you run OS/2, you need this. Contact **VacNat Software**, 1370 White Oak St., Harrisonville, MO 64701, (816) 887-2928. **Circle 1155.**

PC Power & Cooling demonstrated their high-end PC cooling technology by building a Pentium system, which included a **tower case** (\$349), a **line-conditioning power supply** (\$229), the **Pentacool** (\$39), and the **110 Alert Plus** (\$49). Contact **PC Power & Cooling, Inc.**, 5995 Avenida Encinas, Carlsbad, CA 92008, (800) 722-6555 or (619) 931-5700; fax (619) 931-6988. **Circle 1156.**

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**Holland:** Infor Base, Tel: 31 (3402) 54747

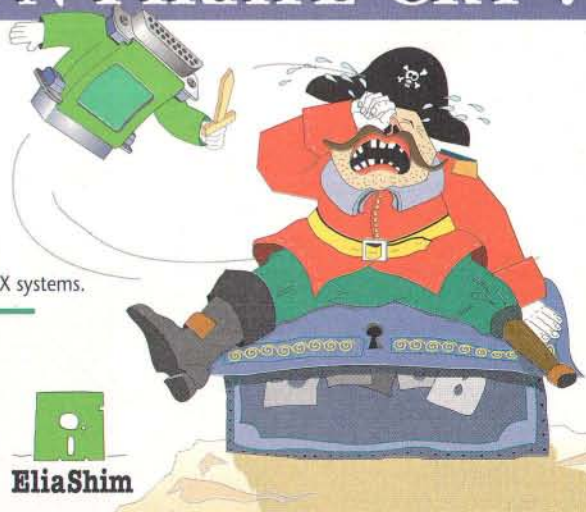
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# What's New Hardware



## THIS COMPUTER TALKS BACK

A voice-activated, voice-response PC system, the InterActive Communicator lets you talk to your computer and receive an answer. You can tell it to open a program, pull up a file, or fax or send a document to someone via E-mail; it can also answer the phone and place outgoing calls. It does all this without your having to deal with the keyboard or a mouse. If the phone line is busy, the InterActive Communicator asks if you would like to call back; your response can include the length of time the unit

should allow to elapse before redialing.

The InterActive Communicator system includes a 33-MHz 486 processor, 4 MB of RAM, and a 200-MB hard drive. The voice-recognition software runs under Windows and DOS. Available options include a hand scanner, a video-capture board, an Ethernet card, and a CD-ROM drive. The base system is \$2995.

Contact: InterActive, Humboldt, SD, (800) 266-4333 or (605) 363-5117.

Circle 1311 on Inquiry Card.

## AVERT A LAN DISASTER

The Rememory Archiving Sub-Server (from \$3195) lets you convert a host 386 or 486 PC into a nondedicated, full NetWare archiving server that backs up, archives, and provides disaster recovery of data. From Rememory (Costa Mesa, CA), the integrated, preconfigured desktop system has a 170-MB hard drive that is preinstalled with the RemServe archiving software system and NetWare; one or two DAT drives for up to 8 GB of storage; and a 16-bit ISA or 32-bit EISA SCSI controller.

Phone: (800) 644-2300 or (714) 708-0990.

Circle 1314 on Inquiry Card.

## CREATE A LAN WITHOUT A MAU ▼

The NCI Banc-Ring 16/4 adapter (\$595) lets you create an inexpensive small- to medium-size MAU-less LAN using stan-

dard token-ring cables. From Network Controls International (Charlotte, NC), the bus-master adapter is configurable for 4 or 16 Mbps and uses STP, UTP, or B-loop cabling. You can disable the MAU-less feature to connect the adapter to any IBM-compatible MAU. The adapter also has a \$150 option that you can add to electronically disable the PC's floppy drive as a way to protect against viruses and unauthorized removal of sensitive information from the network.

Phone: (704) 527-4357.

Circle 1315 on Inquiry Card.

## A TOUCH-SENSITIVE WHITEBOARD

A whiteboard that uses standard dry-erase markers and erasers, the Smart WriteBoard (\$2995) automatically transfers information written on it to your PC or Sun SparcStation via the

serial port. You can store the information as a bit-mapped file and save it, print it, or incorporate it into other documents or presentations. The Smart Pen Tray has built-in switches that recognize the color of the pen you select and communicate this information to your computer; the proper color then shows up on the monitor's screen. The Smart WriteBoard is from Smart Technologies (Calgary, Alberta, Canada).

Phone: (403) 233-9333.

Circle 1316 on Inquiry Card.

## MULTICHANNEL DSP BOARD

A board combining a DSP32C 32-bit floating-point DSP and eight channels of analog I/O, the Sig32C-8 (\$3995) from Signalogic (Dallas, TX) is packaged with the company's Hypersignal-Macro and Hypersignal-Acoustic software. Each I/O channel contains 16-bit sigma-delta A/D and D/A converters and programmable input gain, output attenuation, and sampling rate. The channels also have automatic antialiasing and reconstruction filters that track with the programmed sampling rate. Sampling is simultaneous.

Phone: (214) 343-0069.

Circle 1317 on Inquiry Card.

## COMPACT CONNECTORS AND PROTECTORS

A 2-ounce network connector for Macintoshes and other devices with built-in Ethernet, EasyNet (\$69) connects any device with an Apple Ethernet port to either 10Base-T or 10Base-2 network cables. The Dayna Communications (Salt Lake City, UT) connectors have a BNC interface or an RJ-45 jack.

Phone: (801) 269-7200.

Circle 1318 on Inquiry Card.

The Connector Protector attaches to any DB-9 (\$4.85 for 25) or DB-25 (\$5.15 for 25) connector with jackscrews to take the brunt

of the mechanical wear incurred by frequently connecting and disconnecting cables to computer boards. The unit is from CAMI Research (Lexington, MA).

Phone: (617) 860-9137.

Circle 1319 on Inquiry Card.

## ENCRYPTION MODEM

The CryptoCom V.32bis asynchronous pocket modem (\$895) from Western Datacom (Westlake, OH) encrypts all data transmissions between two of the company's encryption modems. The CryptoCom has a base data rate of 14.4 Kbps and uses up to level-10 MNP for data compression and error control. When two CryptoCom V.32bis modems are used together, they can encrypt cellular data. You can use the modem in nonencrypting applications in which you use V.42bis for data compression; the compressed data rates can exceed 56 Kbps in these applications.

Phone: (800) 262-3311 or (216) 835-1510.

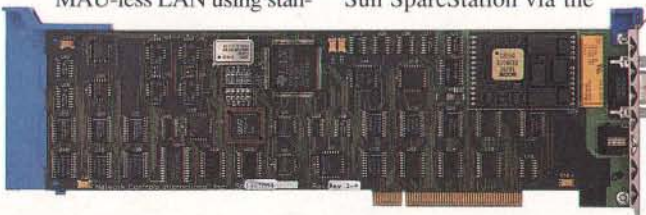
Circle 1320 on Inquiry Card.

## MANAGED HUB MONITORS NETWORKS

The InterLanLink series of stackable Ethernet hubs (from \$1699) are available in 17- and 33-port versions. You can connect them in any combination for a maximum of 96 managed 10Base-T ports in a single repeater stack. From Racal InterLan (Boxborough, MA), the hubs feature FaultAlert, which monitors the network and alerts the network manager of any potential problems by sending a warning message to the management terminal that's attached to the RS-232 connection. When the terminal is remotely located, the hub automatically dials the configured phone number and sends a message describing the fault condition and its location.

Phone: (800) 526-8255 or (508) 263-9929.

Circle 1331 on Inquiry Card.





## GIVE YOUR PC REAL-TIME PHONE CONTROL

The single-line OCTuLink (\$279), an electronic computer-to-phone link designed to work with the Windows-based OCTus PTA communications control software, connects between your PC and an analog phone line to provide complete phone-system control. Features include on-call DTMF tone and flashhook generation, incoming caller ID support, active line-status monitoring and sensing, DTMF tone sensing to switch between fax and voice calls, audio line-in and line-out to connect to SoundBlaster-compatible sound cards, and a parallel port pass-through design.

Contact: OCTus, San Diego, CA, (800) 634-8248 or (619) 452-9400.

Circle 1312 on Inquiry Card.



## AUDIO/VIDEO CAPTURE BOARD

The MovieMan video- and audio-capture board (\$299) captures 24-bit-color video with synchronized sound at 30 frames per second. The Logitech (Fremont, CA) board supports NTSC and PAL analog signals and the DVCI (Digital Video Connector Interface) digital-video interface standard. MovieMan also captures still images in resolutions of up to 640 by 480 pixels in 24-bit color and supports CD-ROM multimedia via Video for Windows and audio .WAV files.

Phone: (510) 795-8500.

Circle 1322 on Inquiry Card.

## CAPTURE SCIENTIFIC IMAGES ON YOUR MAC ▼

A scientific imaging system for the Mac, the Image Explorer (\$6000) captures and analyzes gray-scale image data in both bright light and low light. Intended for applications such as microscopy, fluorescence in situ hybridization, chemiluminescence, and gel documentation, the Im-

age Explorer achieves the range of light sensitivity by integrating image data on-chip at video rates. The package's frame grabber can grab a video sequence of up to 32 frames in real time; optional memory modules allow up to 4 seconds of real-time image-sequence capture. The product is from Signal Analytics (Vienna, VA).

Phone: (703) 281-3277.

Circle 1321 on Inquiry Card.

## WORKSTATION POWER

The 100-MHz Model VL-4100 DX4 workstation (enhanced version, \$2995) includes a 9.8-ms 12-Mbps Mode 3 540-MB IDE drive, 16 MB of RAM, a dual-speed CD-ROM, and a 15-inch low-radiation monitor. The CPU in the Tangent (Burlingame, CA) unit runs at 3.3 V; the on-board integrated I/O features UART high-speed serial ports and eight expansion slots. Windows for Workgroups and DOS 6.2 are standard, as are a FlashROM BIOS, a frequency synthesizer, Energy Star compliance, and upgradability to the Pentium P24T processor.

Phone: (800) 800-6060 or (415) 342-9388.

Circle 1323 on Inquiry Card.



## FAST NETWORKING

The EM960 PCI eMaster+ series Ethernet adapter (\$249) uses the full 132-Mbps transfer rate allowed by the PCI specification. From Cogent Data Technologies (Friday Harbor, WA), the adapter incorporates the company's Predictive Pipelining technology to increase network bandwidth by minimizing processing overhead. According to Cogent, the full-duplex Ethernet capabilities of the EM960 PCI adapter can double the existing 10Base-T bandwidth to 20 MBps.

Phone: (800) 426-4368 or (206) 378-2929.

Circle 1324 on Inquiry Card.

## PORTABLE DATA ACQUISITION SYSTEM

The Windows-compatible, four-channel MicroDataLogger unit (starter kit, \$1195) operates from either a rechargeable battery or external power. From Architectural Energy (Boulder, CO), the microprocessor/flash-memory recorder is self-configuring, accepts interchangeable sensors, and records up to 64,000 measurements. It has an LCD and 12-bit resolution. The unit is capable of HVAC diagnostics and commissioning, utility DSM program evaluation, and environmental monitoring.

Phone: (800) 450-4454 or (303) 444-4149.

Circle 1325 on Inquiry Card.

## VOYAGE INTO VIDEO CACHING

A 32-bit VL-Bus video adapter with video caching, the Boca Voyager (from \$245) provides fast video performance while using DRAM video memory. The Boca Research (Boca Raton, FL) board, designed for peak performance with multimedia applications and CD-ROM video, includes 32-bit memory access, 1 MB of DRAM (upgradable to 2 MB), 15-/16-bit high color and 24-bit true color, a VESA BIOS, linear driver sup-

port, BitBlt, a hardware graphics cursor, and a feature connector. Phone: (407) 997-6227.

Circle 1334 on Inquiry Card.

## LIGHTWEIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

Based on its proprietary DSP-based data-pump technology, the U.S. Robotics (Skokie, IL) portable WorldPort Dual Standard Fax modem (from \$545) comes with a 9-pin cable and includes the company's HST protocol to provide 16.8-Kbps data transmission. The modem also has Adaptive Speed Leveling and Quick Connect features, as well as Class 2 fax capabilities, V.42/MNP 2-4 error control, and V.42bis/MNP 5 data compression.

Phone: (708) 982-5010.

Circle 1326 on Inquiry Card.

## SMART POWER MANAGEMENT

A power management device that plugs into a serial port on your computer, the SmartSocket+ (\$349) puts switching of AC outlets under software control. From CompuSci (Fenton, MO), the device automatically powers down AC receptacles when it receives an external alarm. The configuration of the device is saved in nonvolatile memory for use at power-up. Password protection lets you access the SmartSocket+ via a modem to switch remote devices on or off.

Phone: (314) 343-5022.

Circle 1327 on Inquiry Card.

## REMOVABLE-CARTRIDGE GUARD

SyGuard (\$8.99) is a dust and contamination guard designed to prolong the mechanism life of the SyQuest 44, 88, and 88C removable-cartridge drive systems. Made of rugged plastic, the APS Technologies (Kansas City, MO) guard is fitted with a precision gasket lock that fits most SyQuest mechanisms.

Phone: (800) 235-2753 or (816) 483-6100.

Circle 1328 on Inquiry Card.



# What's New Hardware



## TAKE DAT STORAGE WITH YOU

DAT storage subsystems that operate via your portable computer's parallel printer port or SCSI connection, the PDS-2 (\$2995) and the PDS-4 (\$3295) provide 2 and 4 GB, respectively, of data storage. From Parallel Storage Solutions (Elmsford, NY), each subsystem can double its capacity via data compression. Transfer rates using the parallel port are 6 to 17 MB per minute; SCSI connections provide a transfer rate as high as 44 MB per minute. The units are compatible with DOS, Windows, NetWare, LANtastic, OS/2, SCO Unix, and SCO Xenix.

Phone: (914) 347-7044.

Circle 1329 on Inquiry Card.

## A MONITOR FOR WORKSTATIONS

The 17-inch Multigraph 447X monitor (\$1250) from Nokia Display Products (Sausalito, CA) features an antiglare-coated Trinitron tube with a 0.26mm aperture grill. Manufactured in Finland, the monitor has a resolution that ranges from 1280 by

1024 pixels at a 75-Hz refresh rate to 1600 by 1200 pixels at a 60-Hz refresh rate and a horizontal frequency range of 30 to 82 kHz. An intuitive on-screen menu makes adjustment easy, and the unit automatically synchronizes with any desktop computer, according to Nokia. The unit complies with the VESA DPMS power-saver specification and the MPR II standard and includes a Mac adapter.

Phone: (800) 296-6542 or (415) 331-0322.

Circle 1333 on Inquiry Card.

## SHUTTLE YOUR DATA OFF YOUR NOTEBOOK

The Disk Shuttle (from \$417) from Computer Connections



America (Bedford, MA) is a 2 1/2-inch portable hard drive that you connect to your parallel port for additional storage, file transfer, and backups. Storage capacity ranges from 170 to 344 MB, and access time is 12 ms. To use your printer with your notebook, you just plug in the printer cable to

the opposite end of the Disk Shuttle unit.

Phone: (800) 438-5336 or (617) 271-0444.

Circle 1330 on Inquiry Card.

## CD-ROM NOTEBOOK

The top-of-the-line Hurricane notebook (\$8355) includes an internal 5 1/4-inch CD-ROM drive, a sound chip on the motherboard, a 540-MB IDE removable hard drive, 20 MB of RAM, and a 66-MHz 486DX2/SL CPU. The active-matrix 10-inch color display has 256 colors; you can have simultaneous displays at resolutions of 640 by 480 pixels on the notebook and 1024 by 768 pixels on an external monitor. The Aquiline (Troy, NY) Hurricane also has voice recognition and a PCMCIA Type II card slot, a built-in trackball, and a battery life of 3 hours.

Phone: (518) 272-0421.

Circle 1335 on Inquiry Card.

## SOUND CARD WITH SPEECH RECOGNITION

A sound card with built-in wave-table synthesis and a DSP, the Aria 16se (\$169) has 16-bit digital-audio playback and recording and a 44.1-kHz sampling rate. The card's Aria Listener Speech Recognition uses speaker-independent technology, which lets it recognize most words in its vocabulary regardless of who says

them, according to Prometheus Products (Tualatin, OR). The card also lets you create customized vocabularies and has a SCSI-2 connection that supports CD-ROM drives from a variety of manufacturers.

Phone: (503) 692-9600.

Circle 1336 on Inquiry Card.

## CURSOR CONTROL THAT FITS IN YOUR HAND

An interactive hand-held controller that fits in your hand, the ProPoint (\$129) has a pressure-sensitive button that provides 360-degree cursor control at the touch of a thumb. You can select thumb-controlled cursor speed from a continuous range and select objects such as menus with a point-and-click motion. From Interlink Electronics (Cambridge, CA), the ProPoint has a 12-foot cord to allow you freedom during presentations.

Phone: (805) 484-8855.

Circle 1332 on Inquiry Card.



## IMAGE-PROCESSING POWER

Designed for use with image-processing, vision, and robotics systems based on the TMS320C40, the HETVIO 8-bit image-processing TIM-40 module (\$6750) features a PAL/NTSC frame-capture interface that supports up to four multiplexed camera inputs. From Traquair Data Systems (Ithaca, NY), the card supports the continuous and concurrent capture, processing, and display of frame-rate image data via its 1-MB triple-ported VRAM frame store. It also has 4 MB of local DRAM, a 4-bit overlay plane, and enhanced support for byte-level manipulation of image data.

Phone: (607) 272-4417.

Circle 1337 on Inquiry Card.

## FAST COLOR PRINTING

The 2-ppm Spectra-Star GTx (\$4995) plain-paper color printer uses a RISC processor running at 33 MHz. The printer features 10 MB of RAM (expandable to 32 MB), 52 fonts, 600- by 300-dpi printing, and the ability to accept plug-in cartridges via Pockettes. A 120-MB hard disk cartridge with full printer spooling and permanent font storage is available.

Contact: General Parametrics, Berkeley, CA, (510) 524-3950.

Circle 1313 on Inquiry Card.





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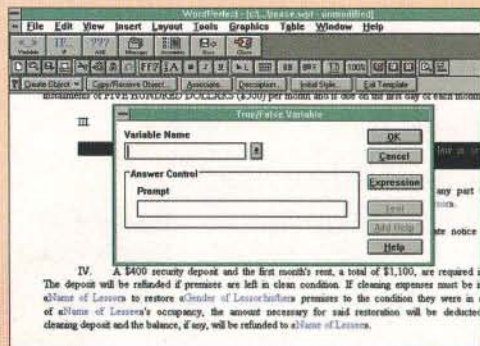


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# What's New Software



## BUILD A TEMPLATE, CLICK A BUTTON, CREATE A DOCUMENT

Now you can build document-assembly templates in WordPerfect, Ami Pro, and Microsoft Word without having to write macros. With HotDocs, you simply open a document; highlight a name, date, or other text that frequently changes from document to document; and insert a variable for each highlighted choice. To assemble a document using the template, you click on a button, whereupon the template asks questions based on the variables you've defined. In response to

your answers, appropriate paragraphs are automatically selected, and variables such as names, dates, pronouns, and verbs are correctly inserted. HotDocs retails for \$49.

Contact: Capsoft Development, Provo, UT, (800) 500-3627 or (801) 375-6562.

Circle 1271 on Inquiry Card.

## REMOTE CONTROL AND ACCESS

CoSession for Windows (two-PC package, \$199) supports enhanced background operations, multiple connections, and remote operation of DOS and Windows programs. Compression technology in the software provides 30 percent faster remote Windows operation, according to the manufacturer, Triton Technologies (Iselin, NJ). Remote access capability, implemented through drive redirection, allows a remote user connected to a networked host to operate as a remote node on the network.

Phone: (800) 322-9440 or (908) 855-9440.

Circle 1276 on Inquiry Card.

## FAX FROM WINDOWS

The FaxFacts FFWIN utility (from \$300) lets you fax directly from any Windows application when you use it with FaxFacts broadcast software, a high-performance fax board, and a dedicated PC that acts as a fax server tied to the network for outbound-only faxing. From Copia International (Wheaton, IL), the FFWIN utility is compatible with all networks and allows for pre- and post-process activities, such as E-mail notification.

Phone: (800) 689-8898 or (708) 682-8898.

Circle 1279 on Inquiry Card.

## 3-D IMAGES FOR ANY PRINTER ▼

RenderPrint (\$249) lets you print photo-realistic 3-D images from any graphics application on any printer at full printer resolution. From Insight Development (San Ramon, CA), RenderPrint can convert to and from most popular file formats, such as BMP, GIF, JPEG, PCX, and TIFF. The software works in ADI protected mode within AutoCAD and other ADI-supported applications; as a TSR program that pops up inside Cadkey, MicroStation, and other graphics programs; and as a stand-alone application.

Phone: (800) 825-4115 or (510) 244-2000.

Circle 1275 on Inquiry Card.

## GRAPHICS THAT SAVE MONEY

ActiGraf (\$795) helps you spot wasted costs and inefficiencies by graphically depicting company policies and procedures. The software divides company operations into microsteps so that everyone involved can easily identify and understand each phase of every procedure. From Business Modelling Systems (Los Altos, CA), ActiGraf lets you dynamically analyze proce-

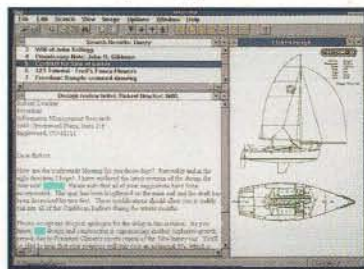
dures via its ability to run a model to show how a process will behave and how long it will take to execute in a given set of business conditions.

Phone: (415) 941-3901.

Circle 1277 on Inquiry Card.

## PUT YOUR DATA ON CD ▼

Alchemy (\$995) from IMR (Englewood, CO) enables you to work alone or in a workgroup to collect text and image files in their native formats for transfer to a CD. You can organize the files into folders, index each file by full text or keywords, and then copy the indexed files to a CD by using any industry-standard CD recorder. Any user who has a CD-ROM drive can search by full text or Query-by-Example to find any file in less than 3 seconds, according to the company. You can view a file without launching the application and



then print the file or copy it to a local directory.

Phone: (303) 689-0022.

Circle 1278 on Inquiry Card.

## SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND TROUBLESHOOTING

PC diagnostic and troubleshooting software, QuickTech-Pro (\$249) from Ultra-X (Santa Clara, CA) has a main menu for quick access to all test groups. You can test all memory, cache, and VRAM up to 4 MB. You can test floppy and hard drives, perform system burn-in, test serial and parallel ports to pin level, and test functionality of interrupts, DMAs, keyboards, and mouse operations. You can also run CPU-speed, system, video, and hard drive benchmarks.

Phone: (800) 722-3789 or (408) 988-4721.

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## CLIENT/SERVER AND 4GL WORK TOGETHER ▲

The DataFlex Server Edition (from \$1995) provides client/server computing for the DataFlex object-oriented fourth-generation language. The software, from Data Access (Miami, FL), allows multiple clients using different environments, such as DOS and SCO Xenix, to be attached to the same server. Features include transaction logging by the server for increased data integrity, user password protection for complete data security, transaction processing by the server for improved data reliability, and tunable system parameters for optimized system performance.

Phone: (800) 451-3539 or (305) 238-0012.

Circle 1281 on Inquiry Card.





## OBJECT-ORIENTED TOOLKIT FOR MULTIPLE PLATFORMS

An add-on to the UIM/X development tool for OSF/Motif, Cross Platform Toolset (\$2500) provides the objects, libraries, and documentation necessary to create production-quality applications for use on multiple platforms. Based on native toolkit controls, the tool set lets the ported application interface look and behave like a native one and provides for the inclusion of platform-specific capabilities. You can use object-oriented programming techniques to build GUIs from reusable portions of

code that encapsulate any platform-specific application code, and you can implement objects using many third-party packages. The package is from Visual Edge Software (Saint-Laurent, Quebec, Canada).

Phone: (514) 332-6430.

Circle 1282 on Inquiry Card.

## SIGN ON IN WINDOWS

Designed for use with a digitizer tablet or pen-based computer, Sign-On Verify (\$395) from Sign-On Systems (Beverly Hills, CA) allows a person's signature to be used in place of a log-in and password or PIN. Targeted as a security add-on to applications and currently available for use with FoxPro, Paradox, Visual Basic, and C, SOV provides developers with the ability to prompt users for their signatures and verify that a signature is not a forgery. The SOV software employs Communication Intelli-

gence's Dynamic Signature Verification technology.

Phone: (310) 274-7477.

Circle 1283 on Inquiry Card.

## SWIM WITH UNIX

Swim (\$149), a run-time and development system based on OSF/Motif 1.2.3, is available for Unix platforms such as Linux, Coherent, and BSD/386. From Sequoia International (Deerfield Beach, FL), Swim includes the mwm window manager, static libraries, header and include files, complete on-line manual pages, and source code to the OSF/Motif demo programs.

Phone: (305) 480-6118.

Circle 1284 on Inquiry Card.

## GREASE THE SWITCH IN WINDOWS

An embedded and customizable control bar, RibbonCB (\$99) provides buttons via which you launch applications and macros from within any Windows application. You can easily navigate among your applications, and you can capture mouse movements and keyboard commands while writing macros. From Software Interface Solutions (Boulder, CO), RibbonCB includes a pixel editor that lets you capture graphics off-screen for use as button faces.

Phone: (800) 266-5866 or

(303) 651-6570.

Circle 1285 on Inquiry Card.

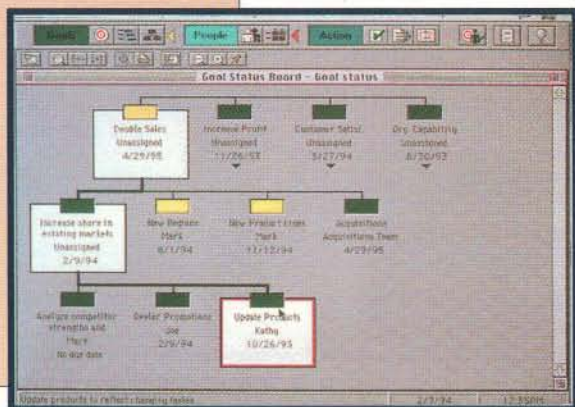
## MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE FOR A CROSS-PLATFORM TEAM

Now available for the Mac, ManagePro 2.0 (\$395) helps managers and workgroups meet their goals and deadlines by integrating tools for planning, tracking, and delegating tasks over a network. You enter information in spreadsheet-style planners, and the software automatically creates color-coded goal- and people-status boards, time lines, to-do lists, calendars, and more than 30 standard reports.

ManagePro prompts managers through a four-step performance management process and offers useful management tips and techniques. The software's calendar automatically shows, in all the calendar views, an item you entered elsewhere in the program, such as a project deadline entered in the goal planner. The multiuser capability provides simultaneous read/write access, synchronizing separately updated copies of the same database.

Contact: Avantos Performance Systems, Emeryville, CA, (800) 282-6867 or (510) 654-4600.

Circle 1272 on Inquiry Card.



## Software Update

**ImageFast 2.0**, ImageFast Software Systems (McLean, VA), lets you



set up your own indexing and organize the information environment your way

via the addition of the Database Design Wizard, Action Icons, WorkFast, Calera OCR integration, RedactFast, and unlimited annotation layers. From \$195. Phone: (800) 899-6665 or (703) 893-1934.

Circle 1296 on Inquiry Card.

**Teleform for Windows 3.0**, Cardiff Software (Solana Beach, CA), adds a forms designer, BasicScript for implementing complex procedures, faster and more accurate hand-printing recognition, and TIFF support; improves fax tracking; and supports multiple fax phone books, among other improvements. From \$1495. Phone: (619) 259-6430.

Circle 1297 on Inquiry Card.

**Director 4.0**, Macromedia (San Francisco, CA), improves memory management, compiles its scripting language for faster script execution, optimizes data retrieval from storage devices, and adds object-oriented commands and a "movie in a window" feature. \$1195.

Phone: (800) 457-1774 or (415) 252-2000.

Circle 1298 on Inquiry Card.

**Synchronize 1.3**, CrossWind Technologies (Felton, CA), builds on a cross-platform architecture and lets you easily customize your work space and change the appearance and behavior of the software to fit your own needs. \$100 per user. Phone: (408) 335-4988.

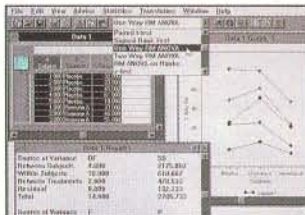
Circle 1299 on Inquiry Card.

**NetCensus 2.00**, Tally Systems (Hanover, NH), streamlines its GUI and adds the MacCollector to provide automatic hardware and software inventory; a product-detail table that organizes data in spreadsheet-like reports; reporting features; and a snap-in module for Novell's NMS. \$10-\$20 per PC. Phone: (603) 643-1300.

Circle 1300 on Inquiry Card.



# What's New Software



## STATISTICS FOR WINDOWS ▲

Developed from the ground up for Windows, the SigmaStat for Windows statistical software package (\$495) helps you select the most appropriate tests, checks your assumptions, handles missing data, and explains the tests' statistical results. From Jandel Scientific (San Rafael, CA), the software's procedures include descriptive statistics; *t*-tests; analysis of variance; correlation; *z*-tests; chi-square tests; non-parametric methods; linear, multiple linear, and nonlinear regressions; power; and sample size. Data-import options include text, spreadsheet, database, SigmaPlot, and SigmaStat files. The software automatically creates a comprehensive report for all statistical procedures you invoke. Phone: (800) 874-1888 or (415) 453-6700.

Circle 1286 on Inquiry Card.

## OS/2 LINK

XoftWare/32 for OS/2 (\$395) lets users of networked PCs and PS/2s access graphical and character-based Unix applications and display them concurrently with OS/2 programs on a single PC screen. The AGE Logic (San Diego, CA) software includes the company's Professional Edition Utilities, full X11.5 compliance, cut-and-paste capability for exchanging information between a PC and a Unix host, a fully interactive Telnet client, and the ability to reroute multiple Unix print requests to any printer on your PC network. Phone: (619) 455-8600.

Circle 1287 on Inquiry Card.

## WINDOWS MULTIMEDIA HELP

You can visually and quickly integrate multimedia into your Windows help system with Multimedia WinHelp (\$199). The program lets you add voice, sound, or video to your help system and extends the functionality of the Windows help engine. You can use the program with or without a Windows help au-

thoring tool. From Blue Sky Software (La Jolla, CA), the program supports .AVI and .WAV files and includes the Video for Windows 1.1 run-time version. Phone: (800) 677-4946 or (619) 459-6365.

Circle 1288 on Inquiry Card.

## MULTIPLATFORM CHANGE FILES

A multiplatform file-update utility, UpdateIt (\$249) lets you ship to your customers incremental product updates in the form of compressed password-protected change files. A full GUI front end for building and maintaining change files lets you create a single file that will update an entire directory tree. From Innovative Data Concepts (Hatboro, PA), UpdateIt can create raw change files or stand-alone .EXE programs as Windows, OS/2 character-mode, Presentation Manager, or DOS applications. Phone: (800) 926-4551 or (215) 443-9705.

Circle 1289 on Inquiry Card.

## MONEY MANAGEMENT IN WINDOWS

Managing Your Money for Windows (\$79.95) from Meca Software (Fairfield, CT) furthers a recent trend in small office/home office software to deliver better ease of use than you get with the usual boxed icons. When it's enabled, the Smart Desk interface is a full-screen configurable office, complete with desk drawers, shelved books, and countertop items (e.g., calendars and Rolodexes) that you can click on to invoke modules such as banking, investing, and budgeting. Also featured is a single-window checkbook/register function. Phone: (800) 820-7458 or (203) 256-5000.

Circle 1290 on Inquiry Card.

## Software Update

**TrueCAD for Windows 2**, Choice Computing (Mountain View, CA), adds more than 40 features, including the ability to read and write AutoCAD .DWG files directly, a Power Bar, an Alignment dialog box, a Nudge feature, symbol insertion with horizontal and vertical mirroring, Symbol Ghosting, easy DDE interaction with other programs, improved bit-map handling, and improved support for plotters and printers. \$295 until June 30; \$395 thereafter.

Phone: (800) 828-2770 or (415) 428-0131.

Circle 1301 on Inquiry Card.

## Common Ground 1.1,

No Hands Software (Belmont, CA), adds an embeddable Windows Mini-Viewer and JPEG compression; it supports Apple's Macintosh Easy Open and PowerTalk software, which is based on the Apple Open Collaborative Environment technology. \$99.95.

Phone: (800) 598-3821 or (415) 802-5800.

Circle 1302 on Inquiry Card.

**The Major BBS 6.2**, Galacticom (Fort Lauderdale, FL), provides a GUI using RIPscript, refines File Libraries, adds full-screen ANSI file tagging, enhances compatibility with CD-ROM drives, redesigns the Polls & Questionnaires feature, and includes QWK-mail, letting you access the program with modem speeds of up to 28.8 Kbps. \$259 for two users.

Phone: (305) 583-5990.

Circle 1303 on Inquiry Card.

**Versions 1.1**, Omega Systems (Irvine, CA), adds the Project Wizard, automatic project-based scheduled check-in, streamlined project maintenance, selectable long and short menu styles, function-key shortcuts to commonly used dialog boxes, the ability to cancel an operation during error situations, and other features. \$279.

Phone: (714) 440-3646.

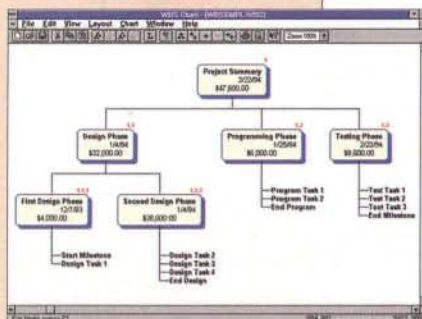
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## INSTANT WBS

A fully featured Windows program, WBS Chart for Project (\$149) lets you create, edit, and print WBS (Work Breakdown Structure) charts directly from Microsoft Project. The WBS Chart feature automatically generates a WBS chart from your current project when you open the project file in Microsoft Project and select the WBS Chart option in the File menu. The software expands and collapses summary tasks and displays either a summary view of the project or all levels of project detail. To support any Windows-compatible printer or plotter using any size of paper, WBS Chart has a fit-to-page option that lets you print the entire chart on one page; if you prefer, you can choose the Tile option to print on multiple pages.

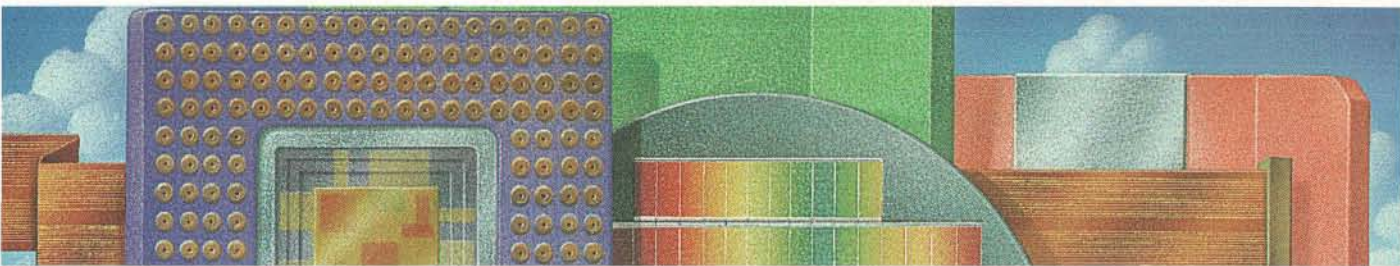
Contact: Jim Spiller & Associates, Fairfield, CA, (707) 425-2484.

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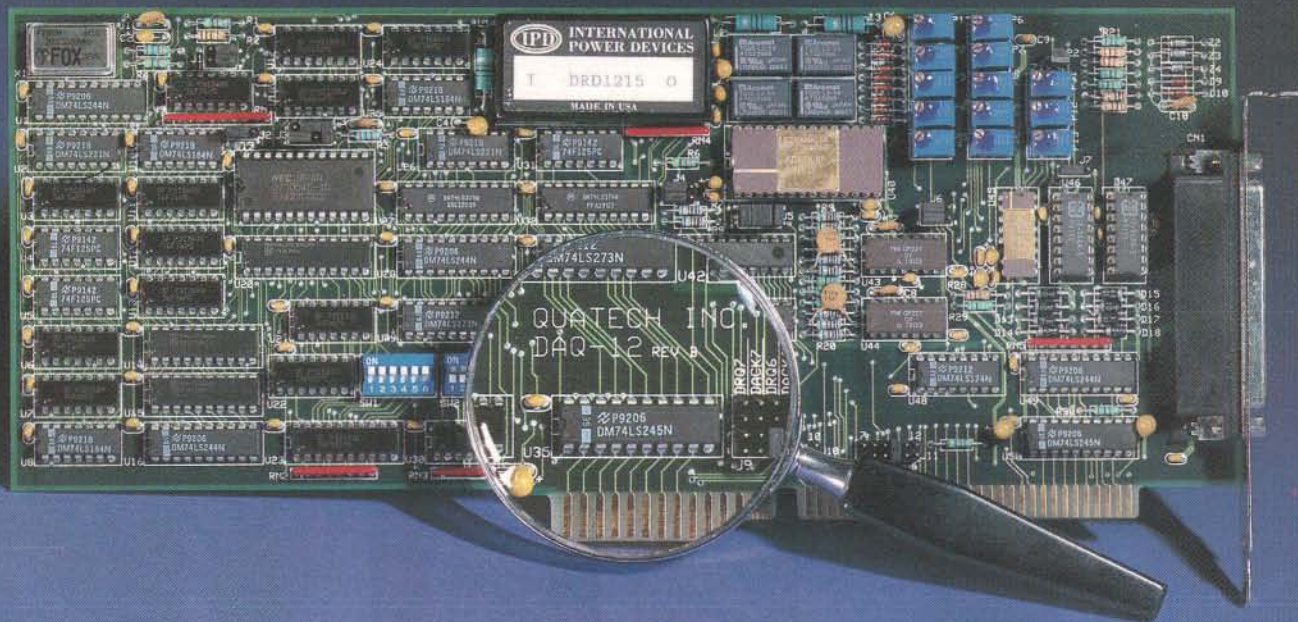


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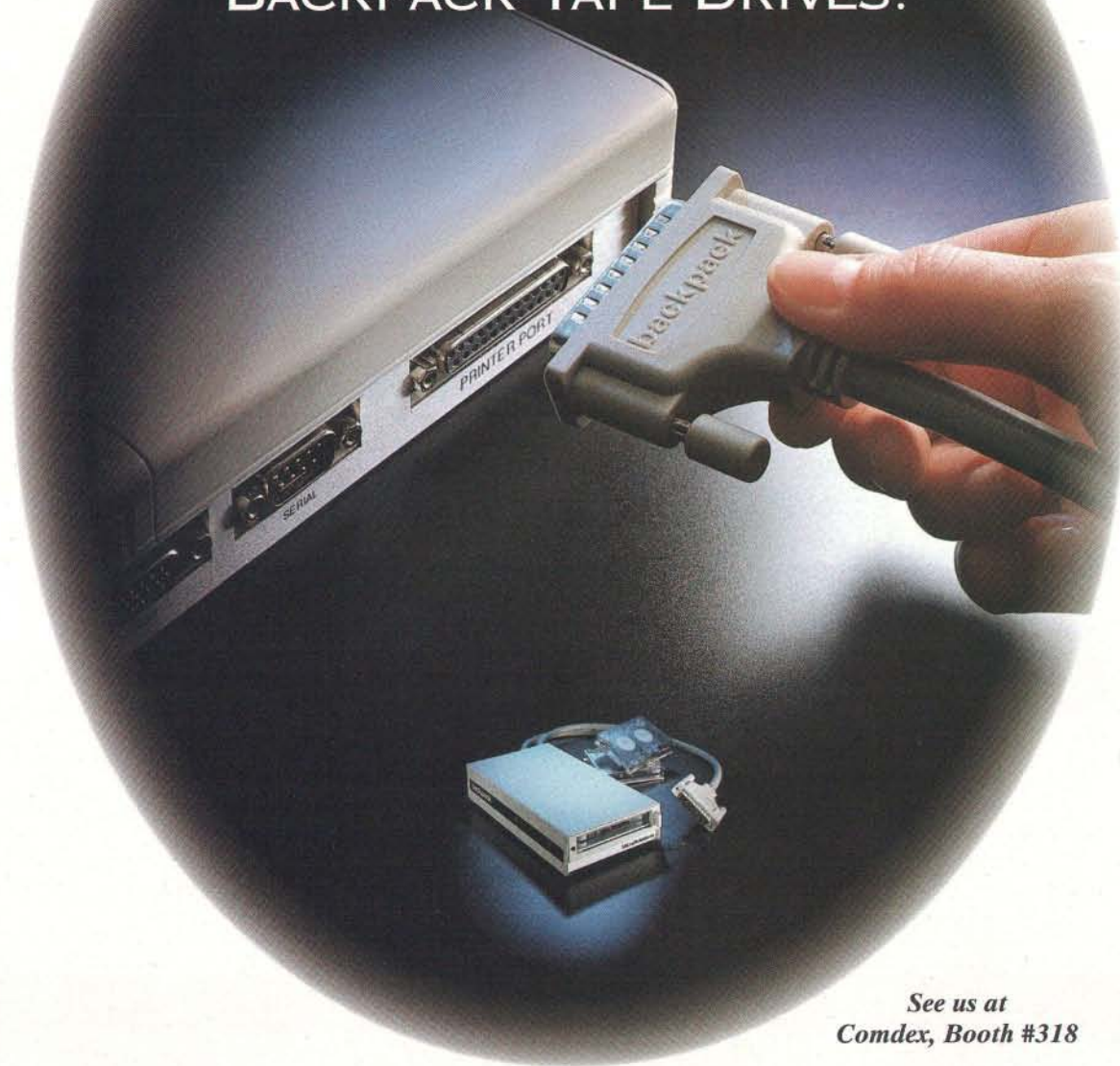
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Bravo NB 486	4MB	\$149
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	16MB	\$949

### Compaq

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Concerto 486	4MB	\$269
	8MB	\$559
Contura 3/20, 3/25, 3/25c	4MB	\$175
	8MB	\$325
Contura 4/25 series	4MB	\$189
	8MB	\$365
LTE 386S/20	4MB	\$229
LTE Lite 20; 25; 25c, 25c	4MB	\$229
	8MB	\$395
	16MB	\$789
LTE Lite 4/25c	4MB	\$219
	8MB	\$399
SLT 386c/20	4MB	\$199

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ThinkPad 710T	16MB	\$1059
	8MB	\$319
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### NEC

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	4MB	\$169
UltraLite SL/20, SL/20P	2MB	\$79
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ProSpeed 286, 386SX/16	4MB	\$179

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T2200SX, T1800 Series	4MB	\$179
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T1200XE, 1600, 3100E	2MB	\$89
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	8MB	\$169
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Z-Note 425 Series	4MB	\$188
Z-Sport 420S, 425S	2MB	\$90
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Advantage Pro 486DX/33; SX/25, Bravo LC 4/25c; 33; 33c; 50c; 4/66d	2MB	500987-001	\$72	4MB	500987-002	\$159
Premium 386/25; 33; 33T; Premium II 386SX/16; 20; 25	1MB	500780-003	\$202			\$47
Advantage 486/25; 33; 33c; SX/20, Bravo 4/33; 486/25; Premium 4/25; 33Tc; Server SE 4/33	2MB	500718-004	780-005			\$69
Advantage 486/25; 33; 33c; SX/20, Power Premium 3/33; 4/33; 33c; 50c; 66d, Premium 386/33Tc; 486/25; c; 25Tc; 33; 33c; 33Tc, Premium II 386/25; 33; 486/33; 486SX/20	4MB	500780-004	\$179	8MB	500780-001	\$358

### Compaq

Prolinea 3/25c; 3/25s	2MB	141738-001	\$89	8MB	141742-001	\$319
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DeskPro 386-20, 20c, 25	4MB	113132-001	\$180	4MB	113645-001	\$244
DeskPro 386c/16	4MB	112534-001	\$180	4MB	113634-001	\$255
DeskPro 3/25c; 33c/4/25c; 33c; 66c; 286c; 386c; 386SX/20; 20N, SystemPro LT Series, Portable 486c, M Series	2MB	118689-001				\$85
	4MB	118690-001	\$181	8MB	112877-001	\$354
ProSignia PC Server 486/33; DX/2/66	16MB	149320-001				\$649
DeskPro 386-33, 486-33, SystemPro	2MB	115144-001	\$99	8MB	116561-001	\$379

### Dell

Power Desktop 325D; P, 333D, 333P, 433P, 486P, 486D	4MB	310-2507				\$181
PowerLine Workstation 420; 425; 433; 450; 450DE/2, 460DE	2MB	310-2466	\$85	8MB	310-2468	\$362
PowerLine Workstation 420; 425; 433; 450; 450DE/2, 460SE	32MB Kit	310-2630				\$1780

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Vectra 386/16N, 386/20N, 386/25N PC	2MB	02406A	\$92	8MB	02404A	\$310
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Vectra 386/33N; 33N1	2MB	02714A	\$92	8MB	02715A	\$310

### IBM

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PS/2 70-A21; A61; B21; B61, PS/1 Consultant, Essential, Expert models x11, x13, x14, PS/Valuepoint Cxx series	2MB	4450608				\$85
PS/2 355X; LS, 405X, 555X; LS, 655X; LS, XStation, PS/Valuepoint Cxx series, adapter board 34F3011 or 34F3077	4MB	34F2933 or 87F9977				\$181
PS/2 355X; LS, 405X, PS/Valuepoint Cxx series	4MB	6450129				\$354
PS/2 90 XP, 95 XP, P75 (pairs), 56, 57 (all), PS/1 Pro M2123	2MB	6450902				\$85
PS/2 90 XP, 95 XP, P75 (pairs), 56, 57 (all), PS/1 Consultant, Essential, Expert models x11, x13, x14, PS/1 Pro M2123	4MB	6450128				\$181
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Expansion boards for 50, 50Z, 555X, 60, 655X	2-8MB w/2MB	1497259				\$199

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	16MB	410-12003				\$647
Ready 425, 433	4MB	N/A				\$195
	16MB	N/A				\$649
PowerMate 286/12; SX/16, SX/20	2MB Kit	OP-410-8103				\$96
PowerMate SX/20	2MB CPU Upgrade	OP-410-8101				\$159
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	8MB	ME-102				\$362
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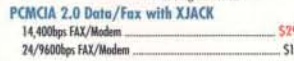
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	80387SL Mobile 16, 20, 25MHz	\$85
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Epson ActionLaser II, EPL-8000	2MB	N/A	\$135	4MB	N/A	\$213
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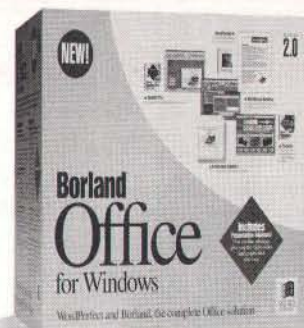
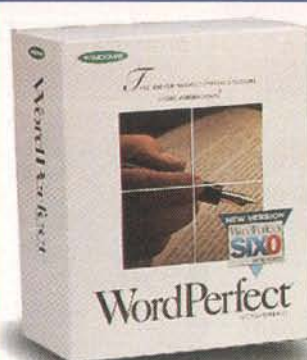
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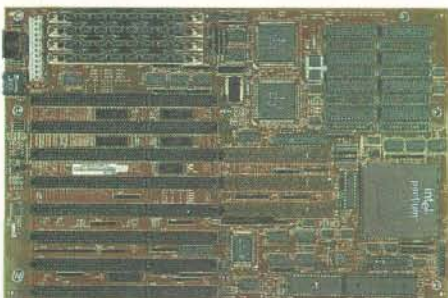
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Capacity	Speed	Throughput	Price
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420 MB	14ms	7.5 MBPS	\$304.00
540 MB	10ms	8.0 MBPS	\$424.00
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1080 MB	10ms	8.0 MBPS	\$714.00

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TYPE	MB	SIZE	SEEK	PRICE
SCSI				
ST3390N	341	1"	12	\$ 339
ST3550N	456	1"	12	\$ 470
ST3655N	545	1"	11	\$ 490
ST31200N*	1050	1"	9	
ST11200N*	1050	3.5	11	
ST11900N*	1700	3.5	9	
✓ST11950N*	1700	3.5	8	CALL!!
✓ST12550N*	2145	3.5	8	PRICES
ST12400N*	1900	FH	13	TOO GOOD
ST12400N*	2100	3.5	9	TO PRINT
ST12400N*	2106	FH	10	
ST12400N*	2106	FH	10	
✓ST15150N-W*	4100	3.5	8	
ST410800N-W*	9080	FH	11	
IDE				
ST3145A	130	1"	16	\$ 172
ST3243A	212	1"	16	\$ 196
ST3290A**	260	1"	16	\$ 218
ST3391A	341	1"	12	\$ 260
ST3550A	452	1"	12	\$ 314
ST3655A**	545	1"	12	\$ 413

## CONNER 1YR WARRANTY

TYPE	MB	SIZE	SEEK	PRICE
CFAT205-A	170	1"	13	\$ 195
CF5210A	212	1"	12	\$ 198
CP30254H	250	1"	14	\$ 222
CFAT3405-A	340	1"	12	\$ 305
CF5420A	420	1"	14	\$ 292
CFP1060S	1060	1"	9	\$ 759

## QUANTUM 2YR WARRANTY

TYPE	MB	SIZE	SEEK	PRICE
LPS2705-A	270	1"	16	\$ 247
LPS3405-A	340	1"	12	\$ 268
LPS5405-A	540	1"	10	\$ 436
PD1225S	1225	3.5	10	\$ 884
PD1800S	1800	3.5	10	\$ 1000

## WESTERN DIGITAL 2YR WARRANTY

TYPE	MB	SIZE	SEEK	PRICE
IDE				
WD2250	245	1"	14	\$ 221
WD2340	340	1"	13	\$ 268
WD2420	420	1"	13	\$ 280
WD2540	540	1"	13	\$ 392

## DEC ✓ 7200RPM 5YR WARRANTY

TYPE	MB	SIZE	SEEK	PRICE
SCSI				
✓DSP3107L	1050	1"	9.5	\$ 770
✓VP3107	1075	1"	8	\$ CALL
✓DSP3210	2100	3.5	9	\$ 1458
✓VP3215	2150	1"	8	\$ CALL
✓DSP5400	4000	FH	12	\$ 2452
✓SP3430	4300	3.5	9	\$ CALL

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SCSI				
410	1005	1"	9	\$ 740
2217	1750	3.5	10	\$ 985
1936	3050	FH	12	
4410	4100	3.5	8	
1991	9080	FH	11	CALL!!
IDE				PRICES
2210A	1035	3.5	10	TOO GOOD
2217A	1750	3.5	10	TO PRINT
AUDIO VIDEO				
2210AV	1050	3.5	10	
2217AV	1750	3.5	10	

## SPECIALS 5YR WARRANTY

MB	SIZE	HT	PRICE
1GB	3.5	1"	\$ 740
1.7GB	3.5	HH	\$ 985
2GB	3.5	HH	\$ 1430
3GB	5.25	FH	\$ 1950

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PIONEER				
DRM-602X	6 CD MINICHANGER	2X SPEED	\$ 875	
DRM-604X	6 CD MINICHANGER	4X SPEED	\$ 1150	
DRM-1804X	18 CD MINICHANGER	4X SPEED	\$ 1990	

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OPTICAL JUKE BOX	40 GIGABYTE	\$ 14500		
OPTICAL JUKE BOX	180 GIGABYTE	\$ 48000		

MOST REWRITABLE				
RMD 5200S	256MB	35MS	\$ 925	

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TYPE	MB	SIZE	SEEK	PRICE
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WANGDAT	3200	4-8 GB	4MM	\$ 930
WANGDAT	3400	8-16 GB	4MM	\$ 1040
SONY	SDT2000	2 GB	4MM	\$ 780
SONY	SDT4000	2-4 GB	4MM	\$ 840
SONY	SDT5000	4-8 GB	2MM	\$ 988
DEC	DLT 4060	20 GB	DLT	\$ 3175
EXABYTE	8205	2.5 GB	8MM	\$ 1357
EXABYTE	8505	5 GB	8MM	\$ 2070

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TYPE	MS	SIZE	SEEK	PRICE
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TOSHIBA 4101	280	-	-	\$ 219
TOSHIBA 3401	200	2X	256 K cache	\$ 315

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4.01 + 4.0	100 USER	\$ 4894
V 3.12	5 USER	\$ 609
V 3.12	25 USER	\$ 2056
V 3.12	50 USER	\$ 2779
V 3.12	100 USER	\$ 3892
INTEL		
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ETHERNET EXPRESS	10 B-T	\$ 98
ETHERNET EXPRESS	16 COMBO	\$ 115
ETHERNET FLASH	16 COAX	\$ 111
ETHERNET FLASH	16 BIT	\$ 111
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BOCA		
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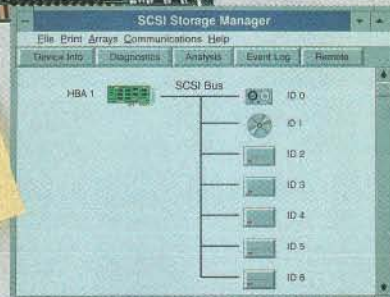
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79214	80486SX 25MHz w/CPU	\$289.95
82333	80386DX 40MHz w/CPU	\$239.95
82350	80386DX 33MHz w/CPU	\$219.95
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42251	511000P-80.....1MBx1	6.49
42219	511000P-10.....1MBx1	6.25

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41700	421000A9A-70.....1MBx9	\$54.95
41718	421000A9A-80.....1MBx9	49.95
41697	421000A9A-10.....1MBx9	47.95

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41742	421000A9B-60.....1MBx9	57.95
41751	421000A9B-70.....1MBx9	54.95
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|-------|-----------------|---------|
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- Expand your memory or enhance your graphics capabilities

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104660	Super VGA Card	89.95
91230	Monochrome Graphics	39.95
29313	32MB Memory card	144.95
19975	(8088) Memory Card	49.95

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19908	286/386 Multi I/O w/ Floppy Cntr.	59.95
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93307	CP30544 545MB	599.95

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10276	ADP60 16-bit hard w/ BIOS	69.95
10284	ADP60F 16-bit hard/floppy w/ BIOS	74.95
74114	ADP65F 16-bit hard/quad floppy drive adapter	99.95
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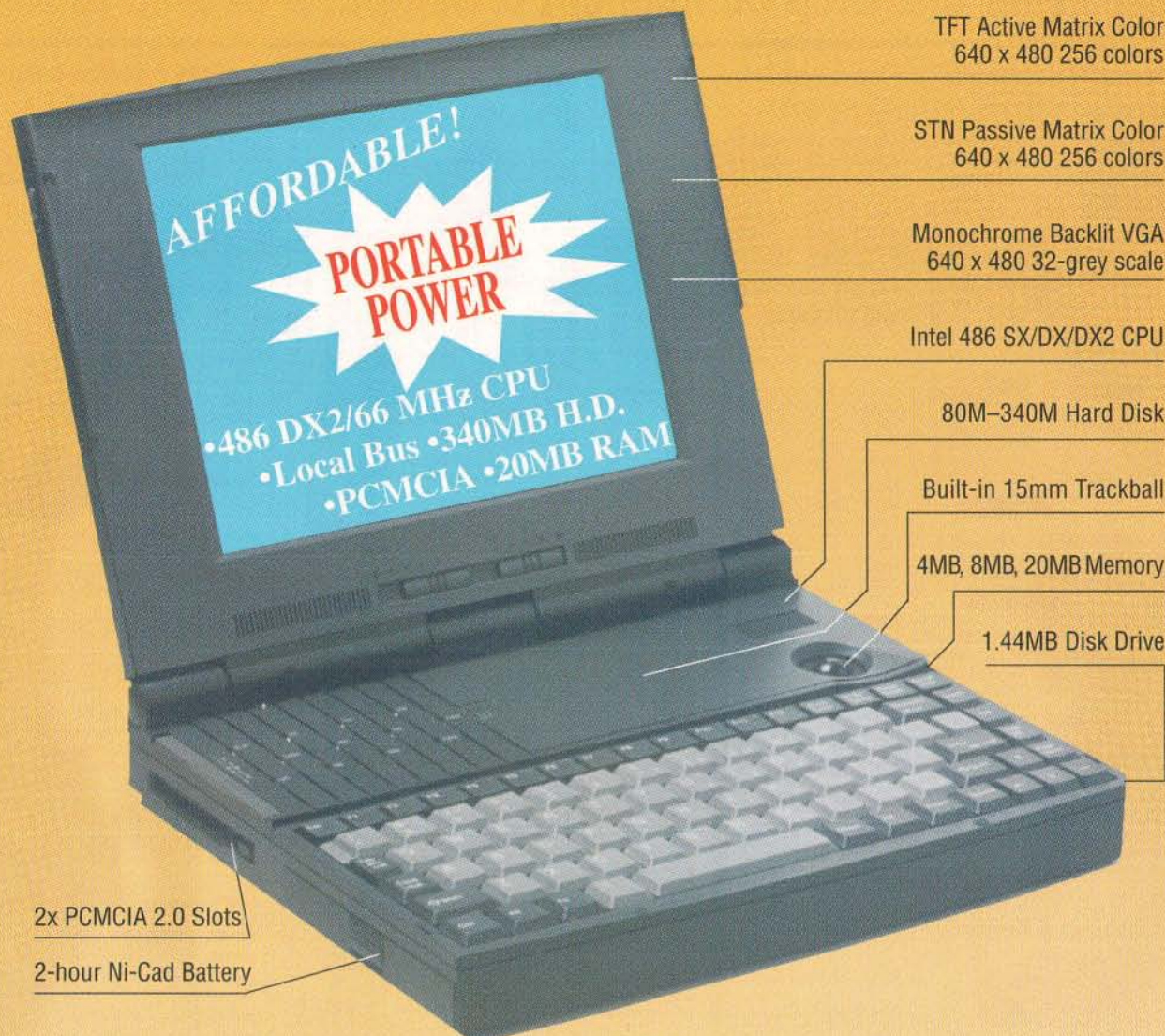
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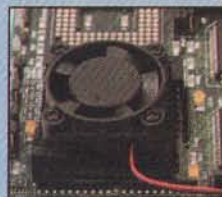


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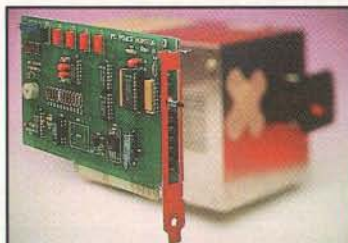
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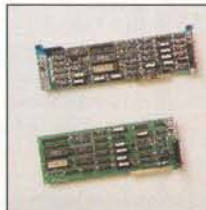


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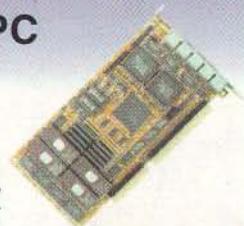
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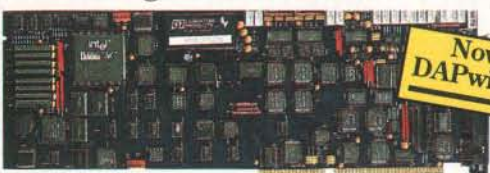
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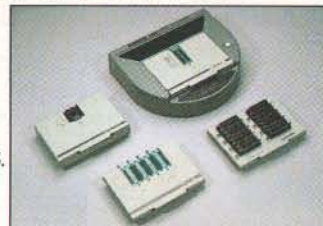
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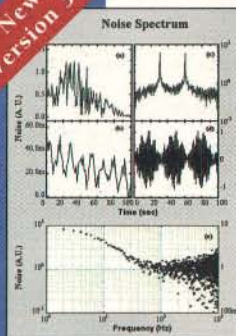
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67	ATI TECHNOLOGIES INC	61 905-882-2600 ext 4444	510-511	EUTRON	40IS 20 +39-35-692-229**	*	MCGRW-HILL BOOKS	167 800-257-9402
246	ATRIE TECHNOLOGY INC	328 +886-2-9995-155	277-278	EXABYTE CORP (N.A.)	192 800-866-6002	520	MEGADATA	40IS 14 516-589-6858**
312	ATS - A.T. SCHINDLER	129 613-723-1103	512-513	FAST HARDLOCK	40IS 5 +49-89-53980020	190	MICRO 2000	317 800-864-8008
*	AUTODESK INC	101 800-228-3601	527	FIRST INTERNATIONAL COMP	40IS 2+886-2-717-4500**	313-314	MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD	202 800-295-1214
<b>B</b>			177-178	FIRST SOURCE INT'L	304 714-448-7750	183-184	MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD	301 800-295-1214
149	BEAME & WHITESIDE S/W (INT'L)	79-01-919-831-8900**	90	FRAME TECHNOLOGY	22-23 800-UFRAME ext 603	181-182	MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD	303 800-295-1214
149	BEAME & WHITESIDE S/W (N.A.)	79 800-463-6637	88-89	FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES	284 414-241-4555	235-236	MICROCAL SOFTWARE, INC	331 800-969-7720
68	BEST POWER TECHNOLOGY	92 800-356-5794 ext 6071	91-92	FUTURESOFT ENGINEERING	244 713-496-9400	257-258	MICRODATA	326 800-539-0123
450	BIX	343 800-695-4775	<b>G</b>			*	MICRO-INTERNATIONAL, INC	312 800-967-5667
501-502	BOCA RESEARCH INC	40IS 7 407-997-6227	206	GAMMA PRODUCTIONS	329 310-478-6774	285-286	MICRONET TECHNOLOGY	162-163 800-800-DISK
69-70	BORLAND INTERNATIONAL	CII-1 800-336-6464 ext 8652	*	GATEWAY 2000	72A-J 800-846-2058	108	MICROPOLIS CORP	259 800-395-3748
171	BUFFALO PRODUCTS	318 800-345-2356	*	GATEWAY 2000	73 800-846-2058	*	MICROSOFT CORP	16-17 800-370-8996 ext CN3
*	BUSINESS WEEK (INT'L)	56	243	GENERAL TECHNICS	327 800-487-2538	*	MICROSOFT CORP	29
*	BUSINESS WEEK (INT'L)	155	207	GENOVATION, INC	328 714-833-3355	*	MICROSOFT CORP	36-37
*	BYTE BACK ISSUES	40IS 21	93-94	GLENCO ENGINEERING	103 800-562-2543	*	MICROSOFT CORP	59
*	BYTE EDITORIAL SURVEY	276	95-96	GLOBALINK INC	102 800-255-5680	109	MICROSTAR LABORATORIES	326 206-453-2345
*	BYTE EURODECK (INT'L)	168 603-924-2533	208	GMM RESEARCH CORP	324 714-752-9447	116-117	MICROWAY	85 508-746-7341
*	BYTE INTERNATIONAL	169 800-257-9402	241-242	GRANITE DIGITAL	327 510-471-6442	530	MINUTEMAN	49 800-238-7272
*	BYTE REPRINTS (INT'L)	161 603-924-2525	514	GREY MATTER LTD	40IS 16 +44-0364-53071**	*	MITAC INTERNATIONAL CORP	40IS 11 +886-2-5018231
*	BYTE SHOW SERVICE	142-143	209-210	GTEK INC	324 800-282-4835	*	MOTOROLA RISC DIVISION	15
*	BYTE SUB MESSAGE	274	<b>H</b>			110-111	NANAO USA CORP (N.A.)	63 310-325-5202
164	CALIFORNIA PC PROD INC	279 800-394-4122	540	HERGO ERGONOMIC SUPPORT	314 800-232-8737	215	NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	330 800-433-3488
150	CARDIFF SOFTWARE	275 800-659-8755	*	HEWLETT-PACKARD	26-27 800-LASERJET ext 8246	521-522	NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	40IS 4 512-794-0100
503	CERRY	192-193 +49-9643-180	*	HEWLETT-PACKARD	39 800-533-1333 ext 8199	287	NEC RISC SERVER	194-195 800-NEC-INFO
71-72	MIKROSCHALTER GMBH	19 800-451-0897 ext 751	224-225	HI-LO SYSTEMS	329 510-623-8860	*	NETWORK COMPUTING DEV	30-31 800-800-9599
*	COLORADO MEMORY SYS	19 800-451-0897 ext 751	211	HOOLEON CORP	328 602-634-7515	288	NEURON DATA	133 800-876-4900 ext 827
*	COMMUNICATION INTELLIGENCE	21 415-802-7888	279-280	HORIZONS TECHNOLOGY	149 619-292-8331	180	NEVADA COMPUTER	316 800-982-2925
73	COMPAQ DESKTOP (N.A.)	2-3 800-345-1518	<b>I</b>			259	NEWVOICE	325 703-448-0570
265	COMPAQ SYSTEMS (N.A.)	167-169 800-345-1518	281	IBM MICROELECTRONICS	130-131 800-POWER-PC	256	NEXT WAVE SYSTEMS	325 800-296-2211
74-75	COMPEX INC	254 714-630-7302	*	IBM PC DIRECT (NET SELECT) (N.A.)	150-151 800-426-7551	112	NOVELL, INC (N.A.)	299 800-NETWARE
76	COMPUSERVE	89 800-848-8199	*	IBM PC DIRECT (N.A.)	56, 56A-H 800-426-7604	113-114	NSTL	291 610-941-9600
*	COMPUSERVE (N.A.)	88A-B 800-848-8199	*	IBM (EUROPE)	40IS 24A-H	515	OLIVETTI SYS & NETWORKS (INT'L)	2-3
260	COMPUSHARP	800-934-4364	*	IBM PERSONAL S/W PROD	208 800-3-IBM-OS2	528	ON TIME MARKETING	40IS 24 +49-40-437472
77	INTEGRATED SERVICES	327 800-225-5224 dept 25500	97	IBM VISUAL AGE	8 800-3-IBM-OS2	115	OSBORNE MCGRAW-HILL	264 800-822-8158
266	COMPUTER ASSOC - REALIZER 2.0	67 800-225-5224 dept 10500	*	IBM WORKSTATIONS (N.A.)	142-143 800-IBM-6676 ext 652	216	OVERLAND DATA INC	330 800-729-8725
172	COMPUTER DISC WAREHSE	298-299 800-959-4CDW	98	INTEGRAND RESEARCH	240 209-651-1203	<b>P</b>		
504	COMPUTER FRIENDS	40IS 8 503-626-2291	99	INTEL CORP (N.A.)	40A-D 800-538-3373	198	PACIFIC COAST MICRO	322 619-581-6040
505	COMPUTER QUICK	40IS 12 415-861-8330	282-283	INTERGRAPH	174-175 800-345-4856	234	PACIFIC SOFTWARE	331 800-541-9508
173	COMPUTERLANE UNLTD	315 818-884-8644	212	IO TECH	326 216-439-4091	138	PASSPORT DESIGNS INC	83 415-726-0280
284	CONNER (N.A.)	155 800-755-0535	146-147	ITERATED SYSTEMS	243 800-437-2285	*	PC EXPO NEW YORK	295 800-829-3976 ext 921
205	CONTROL VISION	329 316-231-6647	<b>J</b>			541	PC OUTFITTERS INC	304NE 4 800-989-5155
79	COREL DRAW	46 800-367-7080	179	JAMECO ELECTRONICS	311 800-831-4242	119-120	PC POWER & COOLING	51 800-722-6555
78	COREL VENTURA	35 800-824-3323	*	JDR MICRODEVICES	323 800-538-5000	121	PERSOFT INC	213 800-368-5283
148	CREATIVE LABS INC	97 800-998-LABS	320-321	JVC INFORMATION	205 714-261-1292	127	PERSONAL TEX	331 800-808-7906
159-160	CRYSTALOGIC INC	109 800-391-9190				523	PHAR LAP SOFTWARE INC	40IS 19 617-661-1510
267-268	CTX INTERNATIONAL INC	177 909-595-6146				122-123	PINACLE MICRO	7 714-727-3300
80-81	CURTIS INC	282 612-631-9512				535	PIONEER HIGH FID (GB) LTD (INT'L)	CIV
82-83	CYBEX CORP	251 205-430-4030**						
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Category No.  
Inquiry No.

Page No.

## HARDWARE

### 1 ACCESSORIES/SUPPLIES

204	ANNABOOKS	324
151-152	ANTEX ELECTRONICS	284
294	SONY	147
168	TRINITY CORP.	120

### 2 ADD-IN BOARDS

322	ADAPTEC	211
151-152	ANTEX ELECTRONICS	284
67	ATI TECHNOLOGIES INC	61
501-502	BOCA RESEARCH INC	40IS 7
80-81	CURTIS INC	282
175-176	DISTRIBUTED PROCESSING TECH	309
275-276	DISTRIBUTED PROCESSING TECH	159
179	JAMECO ELECTRONICS	311
316	PROMETHEUS PRODUCTS (N.A.)	32A
289	QUATECH INC	179
127	QUATECH INC	296
220	SEALEVEL SYSTEMS INC	324
223	TALKING TECHNOLOGY INC	325
157-158	WIBU	42
230	WINTK CORP	324

### 3 BAR CODING

229	VIDEX, INC	324
-----	------------	-----

### 4 COMMUNICATIONS/NETWORKING

165	CYLINK	283
271-272	DCA	171
208	GMM RESEARCH CORPORATION	324
209-210	GTEK INC	324
520	MEGADATA	40IS 14
285-286	MICRONET TECHNOLOGY	162-163
259	NEWVOICE	325
192-193	PRIMAX ELECTRONICS	322
248-249	RCI	325
290-291	ROSE ELECTRONICS	148
219	SANGOMA TECH INC	324
237-238	SIGMA TECH SOFTWARE	325
223	TALKING TECHNOLOGY INC	325

### 5 COMPUTER SYSTEMS

263-264	ADVANCED LOGIC RESEARCH	124
*	AMBRA COMPUTER CORP (N.A.)	32B-D
*	APPLE COMPUTER INC	10-13
189	APPRO INTERNATIONAL INC	321
73	COMPAQ DESKTOPS (N.A.)	2-3
265	COMPAQ SYSTEMS (N.A.)	167-169
174	DATALUX CORPORATION	302
*	DELL COMPUTER CORP (N.A.)	CIII
*	DELL COMPUTER CORP (N.A.)	CIV
273	DIGITAL RISC	180-181
*	GATEWAY 2000	72A-J
*	GATEWAY 2000	73
*	IBM PC DIRECT (NETSELECT) (N.A.)	150-151
*	IBM PC DIRECT (N.A.)	56, 56A-H
*	IBM WORKSTATIONS (N.A.)	142-143
*	IBM (EUROPE)	40IS 24A-H
99	INTEL CORPORATION (N.A.)	40A-D
282-283	INTERGRAPH	174-175
213	KILA	325
*	MICRO-INTERNATIONAL, INC	312
287	NEC RISC SERVER	194-195
256	NEXT WAVE SYSTEMS	325
113-114	NSTL	291
198	PACIFIC COAST MICRO	322
188	RECORTTEC INC	319
169	RFG SYSTEMS	87
200	SILICON VALLEY COMPUTER	306-307
233	TRI VALLEY TECHNOLOGY INC	326
145	ZEOS INTERNATIONAL	110-111

Category No.  
Inquiry No.

Page No.

### 6 DATA ACQUISITION

203	AMERICAN ADVANTECH	326
212	IO TECH	326
*	MICROSTAR LABORATORIES	326
215	NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	330
289	QUATECH INC	179
127	QUATECH INC	296
221-222	SILICONSOFT, INC	326
247	TRANS 2000	326

### 53 DIAGNOSTIC EQUIPMENT

257-258	MICRODATA	326
226-227	UNICORE SOFTWARE	327

### 7 DISK & OPTICAL DRIVES

260	COMPUSHARP INTEGRATED SERVICES	327
80-81	CURTIS INC	282
274	DIGITAL OEM STORAGE	156-157
243	GENERAL TECHNICS	327
241-242	GRANITE DIGITAL	327
313-314	MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD	202
183-184	MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD	301
181-182	MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD	303
285-286	MICRONET TECHNOLOGY	162-163
108	MICROPOLIS CORP	259
122-123	PINNACLE MICRO	7
535	PIONEER HIGH FID (GB) LTD (INT'L)	CIV
261-262	PRO ENGINEERING	327
185-186	STARTTECH INTERNATIONAL	300
199	S. A. G. ELECTRONICS	308

### 8 DISKETTES/DUPPLICATORS

228	VICTORY ENTERPRISES TECHNOLOGY	327
-----	--------------------------------	-----

### 9 FAX BOARDS/MACHINES

529	PORA CORPORATION	40IS 23
-----	------------------	---------

### 10 GRAPHICS TABLETS/MICE/PEN INPUT

155-156	ARISTO GRAPHIC SYSTEMS	275
---------	------------------------	-----

### 11 KEYBOARDS

503	CHERRY MIKROSCHALTER GMBH (INT'L)	192-193
174	DATALUX CORPORATION	302
252-253	ELMA ELECTRONIC	328
211	HOOLEON CORPORATION	328

### 12 LAN HARDWARE

312	ATS-A.T. SCHINDLER	129
501-502	BOCA RESEARCH INC	40IS 7
171	BUFFALO PRODUCTS	318
74-75	COMPEX INC	254
82-83	CYBEX CORPORATION	251
506-507	CYBEX CORPORATION (INT'L)	CIII
508-509	CYBEX CORPORATION (INT'L)	40IS 15
271-272	DCA	171
274	DIGITAL OEM STORAGE	156-157
285-286	MICRONET TECHNOLOGY	162-163
119-120	PC POWER & COOLING	51
199	S. A. G. ELECTRONICS	308

### 13 LAPTOPS & NOTEBOOKS

*	AMBRA COMPUTER CORP (N.A.)	32B-D
527	FIRST INTERNATIONAL COMPUTER	40IS 2
207	GENOVATION, INC	328
*	IBM PC DIRECT (N.A.)	56, 56A-H
*	JDR MICRODEVICES	323
*	MICRO-INTERNATIONAL, INC	312
530	MITAC INTERNATIONAL CORP	40IS 11
297-298	R.D.I.	196
137-138	TEXAS INSTRUMENTS	69
295	TOSHIBA AMERICA INC	190-191
308	WINBOOK COMPUTER CORP	199
145	ZEOS INTERNATIONAL	110-111

### 14 MAIL ORDER

*	AMBRA COMPUTER CORP (N.A.)	32B-D
*	BYTE INTERNATIONAL (INT'L)	169

Category No.  
Inquiry No.

Page No.

*	BYTE SHOW SERVICE (INT'L)	142-143
172	COMPUTER DISCOUNT WAREHOUSE	298-299
173	COMPUTERLANE UNLTD	315
179	JAMECO ELECTRONICS	311
*	MCGRRAW-HILL MAGAZINES (INT'L)	167
*	MICRO-INTERNATIONAL, INC	312
180	NEVADA COMPUTER	316
185-186	STARTECH INTERNATIONAL	300

### 15 MEMORY/CHIPS/UPGRADES

177-178	FIRST SOURCE INT'L	304
99	INTEL CORPORATION (N.A.)	40A-D
179	JAMECO ELECTRONICS	311
102-103	KINGSTON TECHNOLOGY	253
196-197	LA TRADE	320
*	MOTOROLA RISC DIVISION	15

### 16 MISCELLANEOUS HARDWARE

164	CALIFORNIA PC PRODUCTS INC	279
*	COMMUNICATION INTELLIGENCE	21
281	IBM MICROELECTRONICS	130-131
98	INTEGRAND RESEARCH	240
198	PACIFIC COAST MICRO	322
119-120	PC POWER & COOLING	51
524	SEKISUI CHEMICAL CO LTD (INT'L)	127

### 17 MODEMS/MULTIPLEXORS

246	ATRIE TECHNOLOGY INC	328
501-502	BOCA RESEARCH INC	40IS 7
*	JDR MICRODEVICES	323
303-304	ZYXEL USA	201

### 18 MONITORS & TERMINALS

267-268	CTX INTERNATIONAL INC	177
174	DATALUX CORPORATION	302
101	KFC (N.A.)	81
516	KUO FENG CORPORATION	40IS 13
110-111	NANAO USA CORP (N.A.)	63
317-318	SAMTRON DISPLAYS INC (N.A.)	161
305-306	SCEPTRE TECHNOLOGIES	152
141-142	VIEWSONIC	53

### 19 MULTIMEDIA/CD-ROM

322	ADAPTEC	211
254-255	ADDA	328
151-152	ANTEX ELECTRONICS	284
309-310	AP PROFESSIONAL	182
205	CONTROL VISION	329
148	CREATIVE LABS INC	97
320-321	JVC INFORMATION	205
118	PASSPORT DESIGNS INC	83
316	PROMETHEUS PRODUCTS (N.A.)	32A
299-300	PROXIMA CORPORATION	187
169	RFG SYSTEMS	87
221-222	SILICONSOFT, INC	326
136	TEKTRONIX	55
531	VOCALTEC LTD (INT'L)	285

### 20 PRINTERS/PLOTTERS

171	BUFFALO PRODUCTS	318
504	COMPUTER FRIENDS	40IS 8
*	HEWLETT-PACKARD	39
*	HEWLETT-PACKARD	26-27
319	LEXMARK PRINTERS	122-123
105-106	MANNESMANN TALLY (N.A.)	256
515	OLIVETTI SYSTEMS & NETWORKS (INT'L)	2-3
192-193	PRIMAX ELECTRONICS	322
136	TEKTRONIX	55

### 21 PROGRAMMABLE HARDWARE

269-270	DATA ACCESS CORP	207
239-240	DAVISON-WORTH CORPORATION	329
86-87	ELIASHIM MICROCOMPUTERS	286
512-513	FAST HARDLOCK	40IS 5
224-225	HI-LO SYSTEMS	329
*	JDR MICRODEVICES	323
532-533	MARX DATENTECHNIK GMBH	40IS 10
157-158	WIBU	42
232	Z-WORLD ENGINEERING	329



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#### Inquiry Numbers 60-246

60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76  
77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93  
94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110  
111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127  
128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144  
145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161  
162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178  
179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195  
196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212  
213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229  
230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246

#### Inquiry Numbers 434-620

434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450  
451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467  
468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484  
485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501  
502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518  
519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535  
536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552  
553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569  
570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586  
587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603  
604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620

#### Inquiry Numbers 808-994

808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824  
825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841  
842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858  
859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875  
876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892  
893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902 903 904 905 906 907 908 909  
910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926  
927 928 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943  
944 945 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 959 960  
961 962 963 964 965 966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977  
978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994

#### Inquiry Numbers 1160-1324

1160 1161 1162 1163 1164 1165 1166 1167 1168 1169 1170 1171 1172 1173 1174  
1175 1176 1177 1178 1179 1180 1181 1182 1183 1184 1185 1186 1187 1188 1189  
1190 1191 1192 1193 1194 1195 1196 1197 1198 1199 1200 1201 1202 1203 1204  
1205 1206 1207 1208 1209 1210 1211 1212 1213 1214 1215 1216 1217 1218 1219  
1220 1221 1222 1223 1224 1225 1226 1227 1228 1229 1230 1231 1232 1233 1234  
1235 1236 1237 1238 1239 1240 1241 1242 1243 1244 1245 1246 1247 1248 1249  
1250 1251 1252 1253 1254 1255 1256 1257 1258 1259 1260 1261 1262 1263 1264  
1265 1266 1267 1268 1269 1270 1271 1272 1273 1274 1275 1276 1277 1278 1279  
1280 1281 1282 1283 1284 1285 1286 1287 1288 1289 1290 1291 1292 1293 1294  
1295 1296 1297 1298 1299 1300 1301 1302 1303 1304 1305 1306 1307 1308 1309  
1310 1311 1312 1313 1314 1315 1316 1317 1318 1319 1320 1321 1322 1323 1324

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☐ 2 Programmer/Systems Analyst  
☐ 3 Administration/Management  
☐ 4 Sales/Marketing  
☐ 5 Engineer/Scientist  
☐ 6 Other

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- ☐ 7 Senior-level ☐ 9 Professional  
☐ 8 Middle-level

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247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263  
264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280  
281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297  
298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314  
315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331  
332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348  
349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365  
366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382  
383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399  
400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416  
417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433

#### Inquiry Numbers 621-807

621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637  
638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654  
655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671  
672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688  
689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705  
706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722  
723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739  
740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756  
757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773  
774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790  
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#### Inquiry Numbers 995-1159

995 996 997 998 999 1000 1001 1002 1003 1004 1005 1006 1007 1008 1009  
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1100 1101 1102 1103 1104 1105 1106 1107 1108 1109 1110 1111 1112 1113 1114  
1115 1116 1117 1118 1119 1120 1121 1122 1123 1124 1125 1126 1127 1128 1129  
1130 1131 1132 1133 1134 1135 1136 1137 1138 1139 1140 1141 1142 1143 1144  
1145 1146 1147 1148 1149 1150 1151 1152 1153 1154 1155 1156 1157 1158 1159

#### Inquiry Numbers 1325-1489

1325 1326 1327 1328 1329 1330 1331 1332 1333 1334 1335 1336 1337 1338 1339  
1340 1341 1342 1343 1344 1345 1346 1347 1348 1349 1350 1351 1352 1353 1354  
1355 1356 1357 1358 1359 1360 1361 1362 1363 1364 1365 1366 1367 1368 1369  
1370 1371 1372 1373 1374 1375 1376 1377 1378 1379 1380 1381 1382 1383 1384  
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#### Product Category Information

Circle the numbers below for additional information on the products you're interested in.

#### Hardware

- Accessories/Supplies 1  
Add-in Boards 2  
Bar Coding 3  
Communications/Networking 4  
Computer Systems 5  
Data Acquisition 6

- Diagnostic Equipment 53  
Disks & Optical Drives 7  
Diskettes/Duplicators 8  
Fax Boards/Machines 9  
Graphics Tablets/Mice/ Pen Input 10  
Keyboards 11  
LAN Hardware 12  
Laptops & Notebooks 13  
Mail Order 14  
Memory/Chips/Upgrades 15  
Miscellaneous Hardware 16  
Modems/Multiplexors 17

- Monitors & Terminals 18  
Multimedia/CD-ROM 19  
Printers/Plotters 20  
Programmable Hardware 21  
Scanners/OCR/Digitizers 22  
Tape Drives 23  
UPS/Power Management 24  
Business 25  
CAD/CAM 26  
Communications/Networking 27  
Data Acquisition 28

- Database 29  
Educational 30  
Engineering/Scientific 31  
Entertainment 32  
Graphics 33  
Macintosh 34  
Mail Order 35  
Mathematical/Statistical 36  
Miscellaneous Software 37  
On-Line Services 38  
Operating Systems 39  
Programming Languages/Tools 40

- Security 41  
Shareware 42  
Software Duplication 43  
Spreadsheets 44  
Unix 45  
Utilities 46  
Windows 47  
Word Processing 48  
General 49  
Books/Publications 50  
Recruitment 51  
Miscellaneous 51



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Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

## Inquiry Numbers 60-246

60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76  
 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93  
 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110  
 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127  
 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144  
 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161  
 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178  
 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195  
 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212  
 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229  
 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246

## Inquiry Numbers 434-620

434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450  
 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467  
 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484  
 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501  
 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518  
 519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535  
 536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552  
 553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569  
 570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586  
 587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603  
 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620

## Inquiry Numbers 808-994

808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824  
 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841  
 842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858  
 859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875  
 876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892  
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 910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926  
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## Inquiry Numbers 1160-1324

1160 1161 1162 1163 1164 1165 1166 1167 1168 1169 1170 1171 1172 1173 1174  
 1175 1176 1177 1178 1179 1180 1181 1182 1183 1184 1185 1186 1187 1188 1189  
 1190 1191 1192 1193 1194 1195 1196 1197 1198 1199 1200 1201 1202 1203 1204  
 1205 1206 1207 1208 1209 1210 1211 1212 1213 1214 1215 1216 1217 1218 1219  
 1220 1221 1222 1223 1224 1225 1226 1227 1228 1229 1230 1231 1232 1233 1234  
 1235 1236 1237 1238 1239 1240 1241 1242 1243 1244 1245 1246 1247 1248 1249  
 1250 1251 1252 1253 1254 1255 1256 1257 1258 1259 1260 1261 1262 1263 1264  
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A. What is your primary job function/principal area of responsibility? (Check one)

- 1 ☐ MIS/DIP  
 2 ☐ Programmer/Systems Analyst  
 3 ☐ Administration/Management  
 4 ☐ Sales/Marketing  
 5 ☐ Engineer/Scientist  
 6 ☐ Other

B. What is your level of management responsibility?

- 7 ☐ Senior-level 9 ☐ Professional  
 8 ☐ Middle-level

C. Are you a reseller (VAR, VAD, Dealer, Consultant)?

- 10 ☐ Yes 11 ☐ No

D. What operating systems are you currently using? (Check all that apply)

- 12 ☐ PCMS-DOS 15 ☐ Unix  
 13 ☐ DOS + Windows 16 ☐ MacOS  
 14 ☐ OS/2 17 ☐ VAX/VMS

E. For how many people do you influence the purchase of hardware or software?

- 18 ☐ 1-25 20 ☐ 51-99  
 19 ☐ 26-50 21 ☐ 100 or more

June 1994

90 97 99

Valid until August 31, 1994

## Inquiry Numbers 247-433

247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263  
 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280  
 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297  
 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314  
 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331  
 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348  
 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365  
 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382  
 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399  
 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416  
 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433

## Inquiry Numbers 621-807

621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637  
 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654  
 655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671  
 672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688  
 689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705  
 706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722  
 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739  
 740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756  
 757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773  
 774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790  
 791 792 793 794 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807

## Inquiry Numbers 995-1159

995 996 997 998 999 1000 1001 1002 1003 1004 1005 1006 1007 1008 1009  
 1010 1011 1012 1013 1014 1015 1016 1017 1018 1019 1020 1021 1022 1023 1024  
 1025 1026 1027 1028 1029 1030 1031 1032 1033 1034 1035 1036 1037 1038 1039  
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 1100 1101 1102 1103 1104 1105 1106 1107 1108 1109 1110 1111 1112 1113 1114  
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 1130 1131 1132 1133 1134 1135 1136 1137 1138 1139 1140 1141 1142 1143 1144  
 1145 1146 1147 1148 1149 1150 1151 1152 1153 1154 1155 1156 1157 1158 1159

## Inquiry Numbers 1325-1489

1325 1326 1327 1328 1329 1330 1331 1332 1333 1334 1335 1336 1337 1338 1339  
 1340 1341 1342 1343 1344 1345 1346 1347 1348 1349 1350 1351 1352 1353 1354  
 1355 1356 1357 1358 1359 1360 1361 1362 1363 1364 1365 1366 1367 1368 1369  
 1370 1371 1372 1373 1374 1375 1376 1377 1378 1379 1380 1381 1382 1383 1384  
 1385 1386 1387 1388 1389 1390 1391 1392 1393 1394 1395 1396 1397 1398 1399  
 1400 1401 1402 1403 1404 1405 1406 1407 1408 1409 1410 1411 1412 1413 1414  
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 LAN Hardware 12  
 Laptops & Notebooks 13  
 Mail Order 14  
 Memory/Chips/Upgrades 15  
 Miscellaneous Hardware 16  
 Modems/Multiplexors 17

- Monitors & Terminals 18  
 Multimedia/CD-ROM 19  
 Printers/Plotters 20  
 Programmable Hardware 21  
 Scanners/OCR/Digitizers 22  
 Tape Drives 23  
 UPS/Power Management 24

### Software

- Business 25  
 CAD/CAM 26  
 Communications/Networking 27  
 Data Acquisition 28

- Database 29  
 Educational 30  
 Engineering/Scientific 31  
 Entertainment 32  
 Graphics 33  
 Macintosh 34  
 Mail Order 35  
 Mathematical/Statistical 36  
 Miscellaneous Software 37  
 On-Line Services 38  
 Operating Systems 39  
 Programming Languages/Tools 40

- Security 41  
 Shareware 42  
 Software Duplication 43  
 Spreadsheets 44  
 Unix 45  
 Utilities 46  
 Windows 47  
 Word Processing 48

### General

- Books/Publications 49  
 Recruitment 50  
 Miscellaneous 51

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## PRODUCT CATEGORY INDEX

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To receive information for an entire product category, circle the category number on Your Direct Link Card!

Category No. Inquiry No		Page No.	Category No. Inquiry No		Page No.	Category No. Inquiry No		Page No.
<b>22 SCANNERS/OCR/ DIGITIZERS</b>			<b>288 NEURON DATA</b>		<b>133</b>	<b>307 SUN PRO</b>		<b>138</b>
86-87 ELIASHIM MICROCOMPUTERS		286	<b>30 EDUCATIONAL</b>			526 SYMANTEC (INT'L)		81
517 LIGATURE LTD	40IS 6		61-62 ABACUS SOFTWARE		64	296 WATCOM		145
			95-96 GLOBALINK INC		102	143-144 XVT SOFTWARE INC		98-99
			531 VOCALTEC LTD (INT'L)		285			
<b>23 TAPE DRIVES</b>			<b>31 ENGINEERING/SCIENTIFIC</b>			<b>41 SECURITY</b>		
71-72 COLORADO MEMORY SYSTEMS		19	279-280 HORIZONS TECHNOLOGY		149	63 ALADDIN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS		71
201 DATACAL DIRECT		305	282-283 INTERGRAPH	174-175		503 CHERRY MIKROSCHALTER GMBH (INT'L)	192-193	
277-278 EXABYTE CORPORATION (N.A.)		192	146-147 ITERATED SYSTEMS		243	86-87 ELIASHIM MICROCOMPUTERS		286
214 LAGUNA DATA SYSTEMS		329	132-133 LANDMARK RESEARCH INT'L CORP		117	510-511 EUTRON	40IS 20	
313-314 MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD		202	153 SHAPEWARE		235	512-513 FAST HARDLOCK	40IS 5	
183-184 MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD		301				93-94 GLENCO ENGINEERING		103
181-182 MICRO SOLUTIONS COMP PROD		303				532-533 MARX DATENTECHNIK GMBH	40IS 10	
216 OVERLAND DATA INC		330				128 RAINBOW TECHNOLOGIES		115
218 QUALSTAR CORP		329				293 SOFTWARE SECURITY		164
244-245 SHAFFSTALL CORPORATION		330	<b>33 GRAPHICS</b>			157-158 WIBU (INT'L)		42
199 S. A. G. ELECTRONICS		308	155-156 ARISTO GRAPHIC SYSTEMS		275			
187 VALITEK INC		321	79 COREL DRAW		46	<b>45 UNIX</b>		
			78 COREL VENTURA		35	301-302 AGE LOGIC		135
			85 DSP DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION		231	90 FRAME TECHNOLOGY	22-23	
<b>24 UPS/POWER MANAGEMENT</b>			315 EMATEK GMBH		203	536-537 LABTAM	40IS 22	
64 AMERICAN POWER CONVERSION	104-105		194-195 LEAD TECHNOLOGIES		318	* NETWORK COMPUTING DEVICES	30-31	
68 BEST POWER TECHNOLOGY		92	110-111 NANA USA CORP (N.A.)		63	311 Z-CODE SOFTWARE (N.A.)		127
116-117 MINUTEMAN		49	118 PASSPORT DESIGNS INC		83			
119-120 PC POWER & COOLING		51	299-300 PROXIMA CORPORATION		187			
139-140 TRIPP LITE		54	153 SHAPEWARE		235			
			136 TEKTRONIX		55			
			<b>34 MACINTOSH</b>			<b>46 UTILITIES</b>		
			518 LOGIC PROGRAMMING ASSOCIATES	40IS 24		63 ALADDIN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS		71
						191 ALLMICRO		313
			<b>35 MAIL ORDER</b>			284 CONNER (N.A.)		155
			172 COMPUTER DISCOUNT WAREHOUSE	298-299		159-160 CRYSTALOGIC INC		109
			505 COMPUTER QUICK	40IS 12		132-133 LANDMARK RESEARCH INT'L CORP		117
			201 DATACAL DIRECT	305		190 MICRO 2000		317
			514 GREY MATTER LTD	40IS 16		257-258 MICRODATA		326
			104 PROGRAMMER'S PARADISE	44-45		124 PKWARE INC		280
			<b>36 MATHEMATICAL/STATISTICAL</b>					
			217 PERSONAL TEX		331	<b>47 WINDOWS</b>		
			131 STATSOFT		95	61-62 ABACUS SOFTWARE		64
			134-135 SYSTAT INC		112	88-89 FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES		284
			<b>37 MISCELLANEOUS SOFTWARE</b>			206 GAMMA PRODUCTIONS		329
			528 ON TIME MARKETING	40IS 24		100 KEA SYSTEMS LTD / ATTACHMATE CANADA		100
			<b>38 ON-LINE SERVICES</b>			132-133 LANDMARK RESEARCH INT'L CORP		117
			450 BIX		343	518 LOGIC PROGRAMMING ASSOCIATES	40IS 24	
			76 COMPUSERVE		89	235-236 MICROCAL SOFTWARE, INC		331
			84 DELPHI INTERNET SERVICES		232	110-111 NANA USA CORP (N.A.)		63
			* L&L COMMUNICATIONS		331	234 PACIFIC SOFTWARE		331
			<b>39 OPERATING SYSTEMS</b>			121 PERFORM INC		213
			* IBM PERSONAL SOFTWARE PRODUCTS		208	162-163 ROBERTSON-CARUSO & ASSOCIATES		42
			* NETWORK COMPUTING DEVICES		30-31	221-222 SILICONSOFT, INC		326
			288 NEURON DATA		133	308 WINBOOK COMPUTER CORP		199
			112 NOVELL, INC (N.A.)		269			
			125 QNX SOFTWARE SYSTEMS LTD		226	<b>48 WORD PROCESSING/DTP</b>		
			126 QUARTERDECK OFFICE SYSTEMS		43	201 DATACAL DIRECT		305
			162-163 ROBERTSON-CARUSO & ASSOCIATES		42	90 FRAME TECHNOLOGY	22-23	
			<b>40 PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES/TOOLS</b>			95-96 GLOBALINK INC		102
			161 ANGOSS SOFTWARE INTERNATIONAL		219	517 LIGATURE LTD	40IS 6	
			69-70 BORLAND INTERNATIONAL	CII-1				
			159-160 CRYSTALOGIC INC		109			
			97 IBM VISUAL AGE		8			
			167 KNOWLEDGE GARDEN INC (N.A.)		245			
			166 KNOWLEDGE GARDEN LTD (EUROPE)		245			
			194-195 LEAD TECHNOLOGIES		318			
			518 LOGIC PROGRAMMING ASSOCIATES	40IS 24				
			519 MAGIC / MSE	40IS 9				
			109 MICROWAY		85			
			288 NEURON DATA		133			
			528 ON TIME MARKETING	40IS 24				
			523 PHAR LAP SOFTWARE INC	40IS 19				
			104 PROGRAMMER'S PARADISE	44-45				
			130 SEQUITER SOFTWARE INC		106			
<b>25 BUSINESS</b>						<b>49 BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS</b>		
150 CARDIFF SOFTWARE		275				61-62 ABACUS SOFTWARE		64
95-96 GLOBALINK INC		102				309-310 AP PROFESSIONAL		182
279-280 HORIZONS TECHNOLOGY		149				* BUSINESS WEEK (INT'L)		56
* MICROSOFT CORPORATION	36-37					* BUSINESS WEEK (INT'L)		155
* PC EXPO NEW YORK	295					* MCGRAW-HILL PROF REF	223-225	
299-300 PROXIMA CORPORATION	187					115 OSBORNE MCGRAW-HILL		264
<b>26 CAD/CAM</b>								
65-66 AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESS COMP		212				<b>51 MISCELLANEOUS</b>		
155-156 ARISTO GRAPHIC SYSTEMS		275				* BYTE BACK ISSUES	40IS 21	
* AUTODESK INC		101				* BYTE EURODECK (INT'L)		168
282-283 INTERGRAPH	174-175					* BYTE REPRINTS (INT'L)		161
153 SHAPEWARE		235				* BYTE SHOW SERVICE (INT'L)	142-143	
231 WINTEK CORP		330				* BYTE SUB MESSAGE		274
<b>27 COMMUNICATIONS/ NETWORKING</b>						* DATAPRO (INT'L)	150-151	
301-302 AGE LOGIC		135				* DATAPRO		160
309-310 AP PROFESSIONAL		182				* DATAPRO (INT'L)	214-215	
149 BEAME & WHITESIDE SOFTWARE		79						269
74-75 COMPLEX INC		254						
271-272 DCA		171						
88-89 FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES		284						
91-92 FUTURESOFTE ENGINEERING		244						
534 LANSOURCE	40IS 18							
* MICROSOFT CORPORATION		59						
112 NOVELL, INC (N.A.)		269						
121 PERFORM INC		213						
162-163 ROBERTSON-CARUSO & ASSOCIATES		42						
154 SOFTARC		218						
525 WALKER, RICHER & QUINN (INT'L)		63						
311 Z-CODE SOFTWARE (N.A.)		127						
<b>28 DATA ACQUISITION</b>								
521-522 NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS	40IS 4							
215 NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS		330						
<b>29 DATABASE</b>								
77 COMPUTER ASSOC - REALIZER 2.0		67						
266 COMPUTER ASSOC - UNICENTER	136-137							
269-270 DATA ACCESS CORP		207						
279-280 HORIZONS TECHNOLOGY		149						
519 MAGIC / MSE	40IS 9							
* MICROSOFT CORPORATION	16-17							
* MICROSOFT CORPORATION		29						



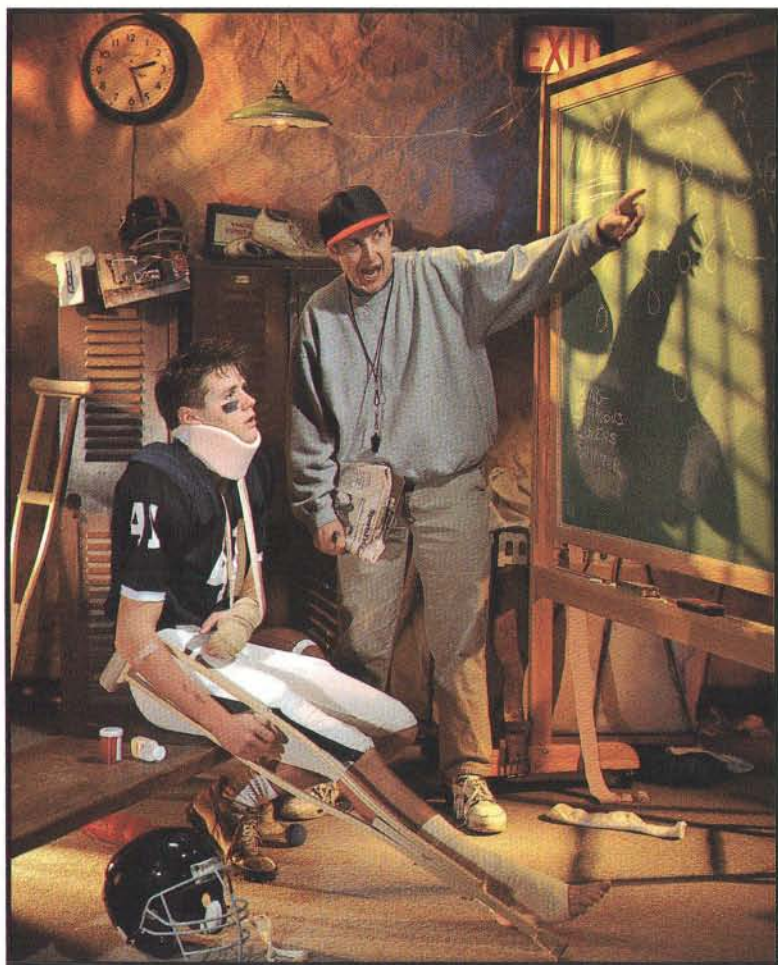
# EDITORIAL INDEX

For more information on any of the companies covered in articles, columns, or news stories in this issue, circle the appropriate inquiry number on Your Direct Link Card. Each page number refers to the first page of the article or section in which the company name appears. IS pages appear only in the International edition.

Inquiry No.	Page No.	Inquiry No.	Page No.	Inquiry No.	Page No.	Inquiry No.	Page No.	
<b>A</b>		1467	ComSoft	40IS-20		<b>J</b>		
1356	Accon Technology	246	1164	Conner Storage Systems	153, 206	1286	Jandel Scientific	292
	Acer America	74	1470	Contemporary Software	40IS-22	1273	Jim Spiller & Associates	292
1060	ACI US	65	1279	Copia International	292		<b>K</b>	
1105,	Addtron Technology	246	1131	Corel	65	1176	Kenan Technologies	183, 206
1357, 1373			1152	Creative Labs	277	1126,	Kingston Technology	246
1061	Adobe Systems	65, 209	1299	CrossWind Technologies	292	1367, 1382		
1287	AGE Logic	292		Crosswise	24		<b>L</b>	
	Aladdin Systems	209		Cyrix	9, 74	1127,	Lancast	246
1062	Aldus	65	<b>D</b>			1383		
1154	Allegiant Technologies	277	1117,	Danpex	246	1128	Lannet	246
1106	Allied Telesis	246	1281	Data Access	292	1476	Layout	40IS-24
1422	Alps Electric	40IS-4	1444	Data Cell	40IS-12	1177	Legato Systems	153, 206
1107,	Alta Research	246	1165	Datawatch	197, 206	1146	The Literacy Connection	277
1358			1318	Dayna Communications	288	1153,	Logitech	277, 288
	AMD	9, 74	1118,	DEC	24, 74, 125, 165, 246, 277	1322		
	American Megatrends	24	1379			1129,	Longshine Microsystem	246
1063	American Small Business Computers	65		Dell Computer	227	1384		
1108	Anco Technology	246	1078	Delphus	237	1082,	Lotus Development	24, 65, 113, 216
1109,	Ansel Communications	246	1132	Diamond Computer Systems	65	1142		
1359			1166	Digital Communications Associates	197, 206		<b>M</b>	
1064,	Apple Computer	24, 65, 74, 93, 113, 125, 209, 265, 273	1167	Dimensional Insight	183, 206	1298	Macromedia	292
1077			1151	Distributed Processing Technology	277	1436	Mannesmann Tally	40IS-14
1328	APS Technologies	288	1460	Duo Conseil	40IS-18	1150	Maxis	277
1335	Aquiline	288	1168	Dynamic Information Systems	183, 206	1290	Meca Software	292
1325	Architectural Energy	288					Media Vision	277
1110	Arco Electronics	246				1178	Metaphor	183, 206
1432	Arcom Control Systems	40IS-10				1179	Microcom	197, 206
1065,	Artisoft	65, 246					Micro Decisionware	183
1111			1119	Elisa Technology	246	1130,	Microdyne	246
1066	Ashlar	65	1421	Elonex	40IS-3	1368		
	AST Research	267	1427	Eurosoft	40IS-3		Micronics	74, 277
	AT&T	165				1083,	Microsoft	24, 47, 65, 93, 113, 125, 139, 153, 197, 206, 209, 216, 227, 241, 246, 277
1067,	ATI Technologies	65, 277				1143, 1148, 1180		
1147								
1068	Autodesk	65				1181	MicroStrategy	183, 206
1157	Avail Systems	153, 206	1133	Fifth Generation Systems	241	1084	Microsystems Software	216
1272	Avantis Performance Systems	292		Frame Technology	65	1454	M. L. ElectroOptics	40IS-14
				Frontier Technologies	271		Morning Star Technologies	271
<b>B</b>				FTP Software	227, 271	1144	Motorola	24, 65, 74, 113, 265
	Banyan	139	1423	Fujitsu Europe Future Labs	40IS-6			
	Berkeley Systems	277			24			
1360,	Black Box	246						
1374								
1288	Blue Sky Software	292	1303	Galacticomm	292			
1069	Blyth Software	65	1426	Galcom Networking	40IS-3	1425,	National Instruments	40IS-3, 40IS-10
1081	BMDP Statistical Software	237		Gamma Productions	93	1448		
1334,	Boca Research	246, 288	1134	Gateway 2000	65, 74, 139	1346,	National Semiconductor	246
1361			1313	General Parametrics	288	1369		
1070	Borland International	65, 113, 139, 241	1456	Giant Software	40IS-18			
	Brainstorm Technologies	24		GlobalWare	93			
1079	Business Forecast Systems	237		Golden Bow	241			
1277	Business Modelling Systems	292	1457	Golten & Wenner Partners	40IS-22	1145	NEC Technologies	65
			1429	Graphics Unlimited	40IS-6	1075	Network Appliance	227
			1169	Gupta	139, 206	1315	Network Controls International	288
			1121,	GVC Technologies	246		Network Peripherals	24
			1381				Nethworth	24
						1182	Neurometric Vision Systems	165, 206
							NexGen	9, 74
						1428	Nighthawk Electronics	40IS-4
						1302	No Hands Software	292
						1333	Nokia Display Products	288
						1088,	Novell	65, 93, 113, 125, 165, 197, 233, 241, 246, 271, 344
						1389	Nuts Technologies	24
		</						



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# Think Multiplatform

**Portable code and flexibility are key to successful software development**

It is exceedingly easy to develop a narrow world view focused on a specialized segment of technology. Almost every potential client seems to want a specialist with a minimum of 10 years experience—Mac Toolbox, Windows API, Novell, telecommunications, IPC, RPC, the list goes on. My favorite is a request for an experienced Newton MessagePad developer, which appeared on AppleLink about two months after the Newton's release. There must have been all of two or three in the world at the time.

The problem with being a specialist is that you're locked into a smaller world; it's easy to lose sight of the fact that there are few homogeneous computing environments out there. I believe that flexibility is the long-term key to survival as a consultant.

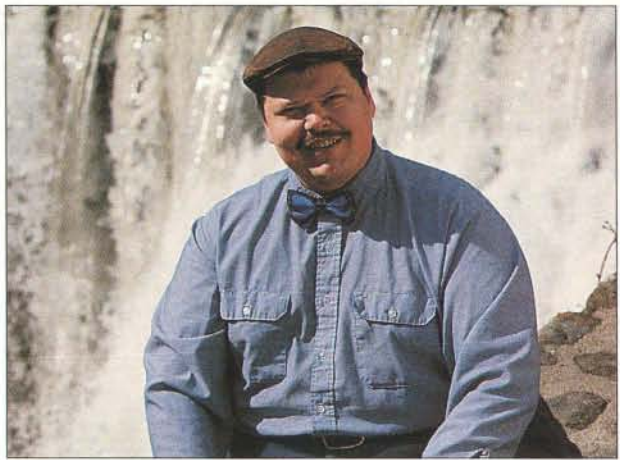
I keep reading that Windows is ubiquitous and the Mac is—once again—doomed. Never mind those poor, isolated souls running OS/2 or Unix. Just design your applications to run on Windows and you can conquer the world. My company's experience with real-world clients offers proof to the contrary. During the last several years, the bulk of our contracts have involved porting applications from one platform to another. And the majority of our porting work has required moving applications from Windows to the Mac.

At first this was a surprise, even though I dearly love the Mac and think everybody should have one. The basic issue behind this move from Windows to the Mac is not that the customer's applications are not doing well under Windows, but that the Mac continues to appear throughout corporations in growing numbers.

Last year, IDC did a survey of computer use in small, medium, and large corporations. It found that 60 percent of the companies surveyed had Macs installed, which is a significant market presence.

Although I've focused my discussion on Mac versus PC, many forces are at work in the marketplace. Windows NT wants to become the corporate server of choice and looks like it will be driving the move to standardized multiprocessor platforms. The PowerPC may add new life to Unix on the desktop, and OS/2 sales are increasing. According to an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, OS/2 sales are small compared to those for Windows, but sales have been increasing since the release of Windows NT. Is there a platform you can afford not to support?

Exciting changes are taking place off the desktop, as well. Corporate reengineering is in full swing, with the result that more and more desktop machines need to talk to central corporate platforms—VAX, AS/400, and the like. You know the world is changing when IBM runs ads



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showing how flawlessly the Mac connects to its AS/400 systems. Users have also become mobile, with laptops, hand-held computers, and PDAs (personal digital assistants) becoming much more prominent.

But what does this mean from the point of view of a software engineer? You must be ready to take your code anywhere with minimal notice. The need to write programs that run within multiple operating systems and hardware platforms is becoming the norm, not the exception. To cope with this, your design and development efforts must be based on the premise that the code will operate in multiple environments.

Simply put, design and develop portable code. There's nothing magic about writing portable code. Design short, modular functions. Separate the user interface from the computationally intensive internals. Isolate your platform-specific calls under generic wrappers.

When you're debugging, use every available tool to provide automated code checking. Have other people comment on your code. Learn to accept and give constructive criticism. It is difficult to know everything, particularly when you are fielding applications on multiple platforms. Last, but by no means least, document, document, document.

I know there's nothing new in this advice. However, I am continually amazed at the amount of code my company inherits that cannot even make it through a moderate warning-level check from the compiler or that ties pieces of the user interface into all levels of the code.

Of course, some products should not be designed for multiplatform operation. But for the majority of new applications, if you plan their move to multiplatform support from the start, you'll have a flexible product that's better able to take advantage of the shifting market realities. ■

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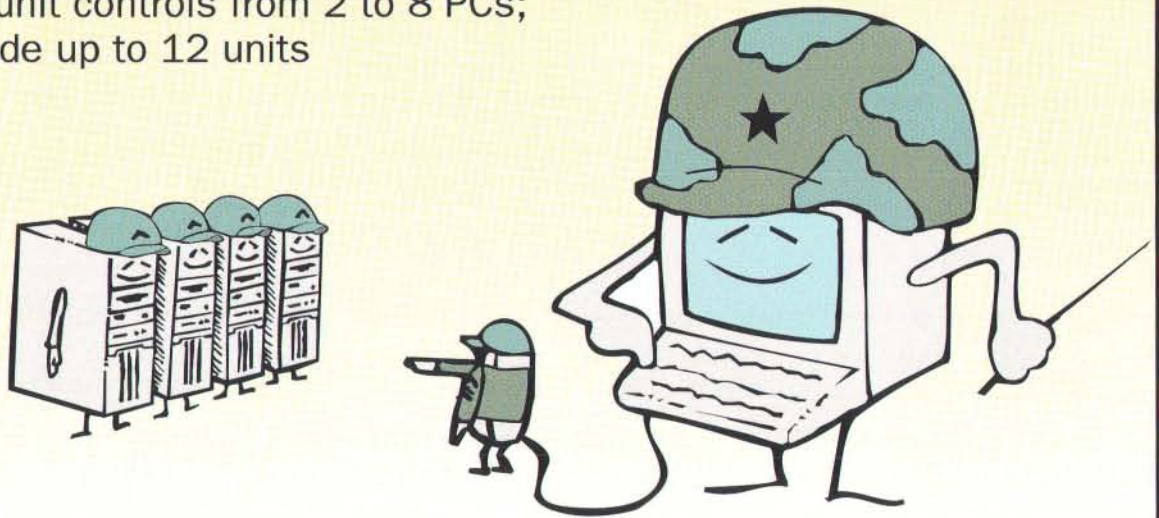
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